

UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY



107 757

UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY















# AUCTION DECLARATIONS

BY  
MILTON C. WORK

Author of "Auction of Today," "Auction Develop-  
ments," "Auction Under the Laws of 1915."

WITH THE  
LAWS OF AUCTION ADOPTED BY THE  
WHIST CLUB OF NEW YORK, EFFECTIVE  
JANUARY 1, 1917

---

1917  
THE JOHN C. WINSTON CO.  
PHILADELPHIA

Copyright, 1916, by  
MILTON C. WORK

# Index to Contents

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION.....	V
I THE INITIAL DECLARATION.....	11
II THE INITIAL NO TRUMP.....	20
III INITIAL SUIT DECLARATIONS.....	47
IV INITIAL SUIT BIDS OF TWO.....	61
V THE INITIAL BID WITH A TWO SUIT HAND.....	78
VI SECOND HAND DECLARATIONS....	87
VII THIRD HAND DECLARATIONS.....	100
VIII FOURTH HAND DECLARATIONS....	141
IX THE BIDDING SUBSEQUENT TO THE FIRST ROUND.....	144
X DOUBLING.....	166
XI THE AUCTION LAWS OF 1917.....	188
XII DECISIONS.....	246
XIII DUPLICATE AUCTION.....	264
XIV GLOSSARY OF AUCTION TERMS....	272



# Auction Declarations

---

## INTRODUCTION

In June, 1915, the Whist Club of New York promulgated a code of Auction laws containing such pronounced alterations that, in some respects, the game was made over. The Declarer had to forget much that he had learned and acquire a great deal that was new.

So radical were the changes that many doubted whether they would be generally accepted. The outcome has been exactly the opposite. The Auction players of the United States have enthusiastically adopted the revised Auction and have become thoroughly convinced that the innumerable isms and schemes, which during the few years preceding June, 1915, were the subject of widespread discussion, have been weighed in the balance and found wanting.



The Auction unrest which prior to June, 1915, was conspicuously in evidence, has, therefore, ceased to exist. Instead of attempting to invent some new method of play, Auction thought has been busily employed in evolving the most sound system of declaration under the laws as they are at present. Players have come to realize that if they master the scientific methods of declaration of today they will not have to abandon them before their novelty wears off. The mail of the Committee of the Whist Club is no longer weighed down with suggested innovations, and Auction writers in their weekly columns are not upsetting the equilibrium of the moderate player by proposing some startling scheme, such as the creation of Imperial Clubs or Paste Diamonds.

In short, it is universally recognized that Auction has been standardized.

The Whist Club of New York, the law-framing body of the country, gratefully appreciating the situation, has just adopted its 1917 code without making a single

change in the method of play or count. Due to the courtesy of that club, the new code is given in full. It will be noted that the alterations are, in the main, in the wording and arrangement of the laws, the object being to simplify them and to facilitate their proper interpretation.

One penalty deemed too severe has been modified; one rule of Etiquette has been transformed into a Law, and one or two new privileges have been accorded to a Dummy who is possessed of such self-restraint that he is willing to keep his eyes on the table rather than on his opponents' cards. But while every player should be familiar with these alterations, they are trifling when compared with the changes of 1915, and none of them will in any way affect the methods of declaration that have been evolved during the past year.

It is an open secret that in its deliberations the law-making body did not seriously consider anything more radical, and at this writing there is not a proposed innovation that threatens to disturb the tranquillity

of the Auction mind. Satisfied with the game of today, Auction players wish to develop it to as great a degree of perfection as is possible, and to feel sure that it is to be their game of many a tomorrow.

It, therefore, appears to be a particularly appropriate time to note the changes in methods of declaration caused by the development of the game, and to record the system which experts use today and which they expect to employ without material alteration for some time to come.

It will be noticed that this book deals only with the declaration. This is because the recent changes have not in any way affected the play. The suggestions made by the writer concerning that department of the game in "Auction of Today" (1912) and "Auction Developments" (1913) have not been affected by subsequent legislation. To repeat now what was written then seems most unnecessary, especially as the aim has been to make this treatise as concise as possible.

In a booklet ("Auction Under the Laws

of 1915") published at the time of the promulgation of the 1915 code, the author ventured to predict that important changes in declaration were bound to ensue and virtually promised that as soon as experience had demonstrated which methods were the most sound, he would write more fully upon the subject.

The delay has been due to a determination to wait until assured by a trial of reasonable length just which methods deserve general adoption. At last expert opinion seems to have reached a definite decision in favor of the system of partnership bidding herein advocated. It has stood the practical test of experience and is not apt to be materially varied in the near future.

It is with the hope that AUCTION DECLARATIONS may, by pointing out the accepted methods, play its part in standardizing the duties of the Declarer that it is respectfully offered to the Auction-playing public.



## I

### THE INITIAL DECLARATION

In a certain small percentage of Auction deals both the Dealer and the Second Hand pass and the Third Hand makes the first bid. In a still smaller percentage, after three passes, the Fourth Hand opens the bidding; but, in the vast majority of deals, the first bid is what is known as an initial declaration; that is, it is made by the Dealer, or the Dealer having passed, by the Second Hand. Of course, in the rarer cases in which the bidding is opened by the Third or Fourth Hand, that bid is really the first, but these bids are not classed as "initial" because they are not made under the same conditions or governed by the same rules as the initial bids made by either of the two players who have an earlier opportunity to open the declaration.

When a Third or Fourth player has to bid first he is influenced by the knowl-

## 12 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

edge that his partner has passed, by the desire to indicate a lead and by other conditions that do not affect a Dealer or Second Hand making an initial declaration. These conditions\* make the bid less informative than one made by a player whose principal object is to enlighten his partner.

When a Dealer, or a Second Hand after a pass, declares, he guarantees that his hand contains at least sufficient strength to meet the rigid and exact requirements of an initial bid. While the making of this initial bid creates a distinct temporary advantage for the side of its maker, a player who has the strength requisite for it may nevertheless pass without being guilty of a serious offence against his partnership, as it is probable that later on he will have an opportunity to show that his first pass did not portray the strength of his hand. But an initial bid once made cannot thereafter be negatived or explained; if it announce Aces

---

See pages 100 and 101.

or Kings that the hand does not contain, or if it allege the ability to take tricks that the hand does not win, it has given the partner a false impression which cannot be eradicated until after the damage has been done. It is wise therefore to pass whenever in doubt whether a hand is strong enough to warrant an initial declaration.

Bids, other than the initial, may properly be influenced by such considerations as the ability to ruff an adverse suit,\* the desire to indicate a lead, or an idea that an enthusiastic opponent may be forced to a contract beyond his power to fulfil. But the initial Declarer has no excuse for being influenced by any such considerations. His declaration is the foundation of the bidding of the hand; all his partner's acts depend upon it, and *it must be reliable*.

Innumerable declarations and doubles which were amply justified with the bid-

---

\* The fact that the hand is void of a suit or contains a singleton does not affect an initial bid of one; it may, however, be a potent factor in inducing an initial Declarer to make a suit declaration of more than one.



## 14 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

ding as it stood, have cost hundreds of points merely because the initial Declarer did not produce during the play the cards that his opening bid guaranteed that he possessed.

There is absolutely no excuse for thus deceiving a confiding partner; nevertheless many players, perfectly familiar with the recognized requirements of an initial declaration, frequently develop what might properly be called "Ace fever." The temptation to show an Ace (although it may be without sufficient backing to justify a declaration) often seems to be irresistible. The player hesitates when he has nothing to consider; the Ace assumes undue value and he bids. Once the deed is done, warnings are impossible, and after the damage has taken place, explanations are ineffective. The trouble occasioned by such a bid does not even end with the current deal. The partner does not thereafter dare to rely upon the initial bids of the erring player and fails consequently to avail himself of many

otherwise valuable opportunities to bid and double.

The above should not be construed as a plea for timidity upon the part of the initial Declarer—far from it. He either has the strength requisite for an initial bid, or he has not. When he is sure that he has it, he should rejoice in his good fortune and unhesitatingly avail himself of it. A sound initial declaration materially aids the partner and places difficulties in the path of the adversaries, but to attempt to secure this advantage without the strength to justify it is merely making a bluff which is destined to be exposed almost before the echo of the fictitious bid has died away.

The first, the paramount, duty of the Auction player is to resolve as follows:

**I will never make an initial bid unless I have the strength requisite for such a declaration.**

Having started his Auction platform with this all-important plank, he should next familiarize himself with the minimum

## 16 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

requisites for an initial bid. They are purely conventional. One player may decide for himself that he will not name a suit unless he hold Ace, King and Queen, or a No Trump, unless he hold three Aces. Another may say that he will always show the presence of an Ace by bidding the suit it heads, and a No Trump whenever he has two suits stopped. With these, or any other idiosyncrasies, a partner could work in harmony if he thoroughly understood them. It is obviously out of the question, however, for players at the beginning of each rubber to delay the play while they deliver an explanatory lecture to their partners concerning their individual theories. Furthermore, expert experience has determined in this, as in every other Auction question, exactly what is wisest and what will produce the best results in the long run. When, therefore, players meet who are strangers to each other, each has the right to assume that the other is bidding along the lines generally regarded as conventional.

**THE DEALER AND THE SECOND HAND  
AFTER A PASS REQUIRE EXACTLY  
THE SAME STRENGTH TO  
JUSTIFY A BID**

A Dealer, when he bids, takes his plunge in the dark; he has absolutely no information concerning his partner's hand. For the purposes of bidding he has the right to assume that his partner has an average holding; that is, one-third of the high cards not in his own hand.

The Second Hand who bids after a pass is in practically the same position, the only difference being that his right hand adversary has not made an initial bid. There are players who allow this difference to influence their declaration and who, Second Hand after a pass, call a No Trump with somewhat less strength than they do as Dealer. They argue that when the Dealer has shown that he has not more than average strength, the Fourth Hand is apt to have more than one-third of the high cards not held by the Second Hand. This is doubtless

## 18 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

true, but it is so slight an advantage that it should not be relied upon.

In order to enable him to make the first bid, the bars have been let down for the Dealer as far as safety and conservatism permit. Many experts think they have been let down too far. To lower them still more for the Second Hand, merely because a Dealer has not declared, would be dangerous. Holding a Queen instead of a King may seal the mouth of the Dealer, but from the Second Hand's point of view that difference is negligible because (as a strengthening factor) it must be divided by two and assigned equally to the Third and Fourth Hands. Furthermore, should a player allow it to become known that as Second Hand after a pass he bids rashly, he at once invites cunning Dealers to set traps for him.

It is, therefore, wiser to regard the requirements of the two situations as similar, the only exception being that *the expert* may at times risk an exceptionally hazardous declaration in the one case

which he would deem too dangerous in the other. These two situations (*i. e.*, Dealer and Second Hand after a pass) are, therefore, treated as being identical.

In all cases in which the score is not mentioned, it should be understood that neither side is supposed to have scored.

## II

### THE INITIAL NO TRUMP

The history of the steady broadening of expert opinion as to the minimum requirements for an initial No Trump declaration is most interesting. When the game was first introduced a No Trump based on anything less than four suits stopped or three very strong suits was considered unsound and was severely criticised, when unsuccessful. In time, however, conservatism began to realize that the "unjustified" bids of the "rash players" were in the long run producing satisfactory results and when a writer ventured to publish a list of No Trump requirements far less exacting than any previously regarded as orthodox, they were at once accepted. Following this came the elimination of the low valued Spade bids and the consequent abandonment of No Trump "invitations." The pendulum then swung to the other extreme and

many players began to regard an initial No Trump as little more than evidence that its maker had the first chance to speak. This, obviously, proved unsatisfactory; it paralyzed the information hitherto conveyed by the initial bid and did not benefit the Declarer because, even if left in with his audacious No Trump, he did not advance his score unless his partner held a hand with which he would have bid in any event. The result is the minimum No Trump of today is progressive and sane. Sound bidders recognize the advantage of calling the No Trump first, as it eliminates all adverse calls of one and sometimes, when the strength of the opponents is considerable but divided, results in shutting out a declaration which would have proved profitable. But, so that the initial No Trump may be of real use to the partner and may enable him to advance it with safety, it must show some real strength and its limitations must be clearly defined and understood.



## 22 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

The following are now the No Trump requirements of the scientific bidder:

### THE MINIMUM STRENGTH OF AN INITIAL NO TRUMP

An initial Declarer should bid one No Trump whenever he has—

- (A) A hand above the average (Note 1) with three suits stopped (Note 2).
- (B) A solid (Note 3) five card minor suit and another Ace.
- (C) A hand containing two powerful (Note 4) short suits.

(NOTE 1) The average holding of high cards is one Ace, one King, one Queen and one Knave. From the standpoint of averages it is immaterial whether they are all in one suit or divided, but the requirements of a No Trump declaration demand that they must be so divided that they stop three suits. When this is the case and the hand contains a face card or Ace above the average it is a No Trumper. It is also a No Trumper when with the three suits stopped it contains an extra Ace in place of a lower honor (*i. e.*, four in all), or when it contains three Aces without other strength.

(NOTE 2) It is easy to determine what the Declarer should consider a stopped suit. That an Ace comes under that head is self-evident. So also does a King, if accompanied by one small card, because the original lead comes up to the Declarer. A Queen with but one or two small cards will not stop a suit when the adversary to the right has either the Ace or King, but Queen and three small is considered safe because to be captured the Queen must be

led through twice. Queen, Knave and one other is satisfactory. Knave, Ten and two others stops a suit, but Knave and three small is even more unreliable than Queen and two small.

It, therefore, becomes evident that a Declarer to count a suit as stopped must have in it one of the following holdings:

Ace.  
King and one other.  
Queen and three others.  
Queen, Knave and one other.  
Knave and four others.  
Knave, Ten and two others.

Knave and four others and Queen and three others both stop a suit, but are very light assistance for a No Trump. When either is depended upon, the other two suits must have real strength.

(NOTE 3) The weakest suit considered "solid" for the purpose of this declaration is Ace, King, Queen, X, X. Of course, it may not run, but it will more than two-thirds of the time, and when it does not the Declarer has the satisfaction of realizing that a game with his minor suit the trump would have been impossible.

(NOTE 4) For the purposes of declaration a "powerful" short suit is one which contains either

Ace, King,  
Ace, Queen, Knave,  
Ace, Queen, Ten.

A hand with two such suits, regardless of whether they both be the same or any combination of the three, is a No Trump.

When one suit is Ace, King, Queen, which is, of course, appreciably stronger than either of the above-named combinations, the other may be somewhat weaker. An Ace accompanied by either a Queen, a Knave and one small, or a Ten and two small, is sufficient to justify a No Trump with a Tierce Major as its companion.

A few examples follow:

## 24 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

### CLASS A

Border Line No Trump Bids.

Suit 1	Ace, X, X,
" 2	King, Knave, X,
" 3	Queen, Knave, X, X,
" 4	X, X, X.

Suit 1	Ace, X, X,
" 2	Ace, Knave, X,
" 3	King, X, X, X,
" 4	X, X, X.

Suit 1	Ace, X, X,
" 2	Ace, X, X,
" 3	Ace, X, X,
" 4	X, X, X, X.

Suit 1	Ace, King, X,
" 2	Knave, Ten, X, X,
" 3	King, Ten, X, X,
" 4	X, X.

## AUCTION DECLARATIONS 25

Hands which fall just short of being Class A.

No Trumpers.

Suit 1	Ace, X, X,
" 2	Queen, X, X,
" 3	Queen, Knave, Ten,
" 4	X, X, X, X.

Suit 1	Ace, X, X,
" 2	King, Knave, X, X,
" 3	Knave, Ten, X,
" 4	X, X, X.

Suit 1	Ace, X, X,
" 2	King, Queen, X,
" 3	Knave, X, X, X,
" 4	X, X, X.

Suit 1	Ace, X, X,
" 2	Ace, X, X, X,
" 3	Queen, X, X,
" 4	X, X, X.

## 26 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

### CLASS B

Border Line No Trumpers.

Suit 1	Ace, X,
" 2	X, X, X,
" 3	X, X, X,
" Clubs	Ace, King, Queen, X, X.

Suit 1	Ace, X,
" 2	X, X, X,
" Diamonds	Ace, King, Queen, X, X, X,
" 4	X, X.

---

Hands which fall just short of being Class B.  
No Trumpers.

Suit 1	Ace, X,
" 2	X, X, X,
" 3	X, X, X,
" Clubs	Ace, King, Knave, X, X.

Suit 1	King, X,
" 2	X, X, X,
" Diamonds	Ace, King, Queen, X, X,
" 4	X, X, X.

## CLASS C

## Border Line No Trumpers.

Suit 1	Ace, King, X,
“ 2	Ace, Queen, Ten,
“ 3	X, X, X,
“ 4	X, X, X, X.
Suit 1	Ace, Queen, Knave,
“ 2	Ace, Queen, Ten,
“ 3	X, X, X, X,
“ 4	X, X, X.
Suit 1	Ace, King, Queen,
“ 2	Ace, Knave, X,
“ 3	X, X, X, X,
“ 4	X, X, X.

---

Hands which fall just short of being Class C.

## No Trumpers.

Suit 1	Ace, King, X,
“ 2	Ace, Knave, X,
“ 3	X, X, X,
“ 4	X, X, X, X.

## 28 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Suit 1	Ace, Queen, Knave,
“ 2	Ace, Queen, X,
“ 3	X, X, X,
“ 4	X, X, X, X.

Suit 1	Ace, King, Queen,
“ 2	Ace, X,
“ 3	X, X, X, X,
“ 4	X, X, X, X.

---

It is quite apparent that the difference between No Trumpers that are considered sound and those that are not, in many cases, is seemingly trivial. To the inexperienced or thoughtless player some of the distinctions are bound to appear arbitrary and unimportant. For example, the presence or absence of a Deuce accompanying Knave, Ten X, may be the deciding factor in determining whether the Declarer should boldly announce a No Trump or prudently pass. The thoughtless may call this absurd, but the success or failure of the make may depend upon whether or not the hand contain

that apparently insignificant card. The leader may have a six-card Ace, King, Queen holding in that suit without a re-entry, and that seemingly worthless Deuce may spell the difference between game and a non-fulfilled contract.

Conservative players of the old school may allege that some of the No Trumpers herein advocated are too light, but the soundness of each type has been fully proven by the best of teachers—experience.

To illustrate, the weakest in actual tricks of the No Trumpers above mentioned will be considered. These are unquestionably the examples given under the Class A head, yet they all have at least three suits safely stopped with a sure trick in each. At first it may appear to be the height of audacity for a player with possibly only three tricks to be willing to contract to take seven, but it really is not as rash as it seems. The advantage of playing the twenty-six cards with a harmonious purpose is worth



## 30 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

approximately one trick; the Dummy may be expected to render average assistance (*i. e.*, three tricks), which, with the three in the Declarer's hand, makes good the declaration. Of course, the Dummy may not have a hand of average strength, but even then the loss is not apt to be serious, as a double of one No Trump rarely stands.\*

In any deal in which such a No Trump is beaten the chances are that the adversaries, had they known their strength, could have scored a game, so that unless the loss should be over one hundred (which is most unusual) the bid is a profitable gambit.

It is not merely the advantage of shutting out adverse declarations or winning doubtful odd tricks that makes these declarations advantageous. There is as great a chance that the partner has more than average assistance as there is that he has less, and it takes very little more than three tricks in the Dummy to enable

---

\* See page 92.

a clever player to score a game with even the weakest of the conventional No Trump makes.

It may not be out of place, even at the risk of repeating what has been said, to comment briefly upon the wisdom of declaring each of the three classes of No Trumpers.

(A)

This is the class specially referred to above, and while when made with only border-line strength it is the most dangerous of the No Trump makes considered sound, yet in the long run when the Declarer by his play is able to realize the full value of his cards it is a winning declaration.

The situation is quite different when the Declarer is an inexperienced or weak player, or when he is so outclassed by his adversaries that he not only cannot hope (to use the vernacular) "to put one over" but also has good reason to fear that he will not secure all the tricks that sound play would produce. Under these condi-

## 32 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

tions conservatism is most advisable.\* To justify an opening bid the hand of a weak player should contain strength over the minimum requirement in the same ratio that his playing ability falls below that of the rest of the table.

### (B)

A solid minor suit and a side Ace has for years been considered a sound No Trump.†

It is quite true that any No Trumper that has only two suits stopped carries its quota of risk, and yet this declaration is not in serious danger unless the partner should not be able to stop either of the defenceless suits. The odds against this are about five to one (in about thirty-five per cent of the cases in which the bid is made he will stop both), and the chances so greatly favor a game when the partner renders average assistance that few question the wisdom of the

---

\*It is better team work for a poor player to support his partner's bid than to make an initial declaration.

† With a similar holding in a major suit, that suit, not a No Trump, should be bid.

declaration even when the failure to name a minor suit containing four honors entails a sacrifice in the honor column.

The game is worth so much more than the greatest possible honor score that it must always be the paramount object.

The Class B hand with which eleven tricks can be scored with Diamonds or Clubs and yet nine tricks cannot be made with No Trumps is very unusual. Such hands, however, do occur when the Declarer and his partner are void of, or have but a singleton in, different suits and the partner has strength and length in the Ace suit of the Declarer. This is a possibility to bear in mind, especially when the strong suit numbers six or seven cards, but it is impossible to diagnose at the time of the initial bid and it should not interfere with the declaration of a conventional Class B No Trump, unless the hand be a veritable freak.\*

\* Such as a seven-card suit and a blank suit.      Such a hand as—

Spades	None,
Hearts	Ace,
Diamonds	Ace, King, X, X, X, X, X,
Clubs	Queen, Knave, Ten, X, X,

would be a safer Diamond than a No Trump.

## 34 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Some players bid a No Trump with a solid minor suit supported only by a guarded King. Before the minor suits had been accorded their present value, this was perhaps a justifiable risk, but now this declaration is made only by the very rash, the ultra-sanguine, or by those who feel that owing to their superior skill it is important that they play the hand rather than permit the partner to do so.

(C)

The No Trump with two powerful short suits is a comparatively modern invention. For years bidding a No Trump with two defenceless suits (unless the hand came within the limits of Class B) was considered unsound, but the abandonment of all invitation bids, including the bidding of short minor suits and low-valued Spades,\* has rendered the declaration advantageous.

---

\* The short suit bid, as is thoroughly explained elsewhere (see pages 53-60), is now deemed inadvisable and the Spade rated at two has been abolished by legislation.

A player with great strength in two short suits may have a hand which, with but little assistance from his partner, will score game. To declare either suit would be grossly misleading, as it would show length; therefore the bidder of today must either call the No Trump himself or pass and await subsequent developments. The latter course results in many opportunities being lost. Of course, should he pass and his partner declare, the holder of the Class C hand can assist or bid No Trump and no harm is done. When, however, after his pass the adversary bids and his partner does not, the chance to declare with this hand is lost and yet a partner not strong enough to bid may readily help such a hand sufficiently to make good its declaration, if not game.

Initial bids which must be taken out by the partner are no longer recognized; in these days every initial bid means exactly what it says and as every intelligent partner knows that he must not expect

## 36 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

too much from an original No Trump everything should move harmoniously.

It will be observed that the minimum strength required for a Class C No Trump is about one trick greater than the minimum Class A requirement. This additional trick in most cases fully compensates for the fact that one more suit is defenceless. Of course, the danger of bidding a No Trump with two defenceless suits has not decreased, but the substantial gain which results in a majority of the cases in which this bid is used seems to make the taking of the risk obligatory.

One example will make this advantage clear. Suppose the initial Declarer holds

Spades	Ace, King, X,
Hearts	X, X, X,
Diamonds	Ace, King, X,
Clubs	X, X, X, X,

and that the partner holds

Spades	Queen, X,
Hearts	Ace, X,
Diamonds	Queen, Knave, X, X, X,
Clubs	X, X, X, X.

A game is assured unless the adversaries take in five Club tricks at the start, which is most improbable, as they only have seven in their two hands.

With such a hand, should the initial declaration be passed, the chances are that the No Trump will never be called and the opportunity to make game will be thrown away.

### **EXCEPTION TO THE NO TRUMP BIDS**

There is one important exception to the No Trump bids above described, and that is a hand which otherwise would be a No Trumper but which has as its strongest suit five or more Spades or Hearts. It takes only one more trick to go game when a major suit is called than when the declaration is No Trump, and with a defenceless suit (especially when it is very short) it is much safer to declare a strong major suit. For example, with such a hand as—

Suit 1    Ace, King, Knave, X, X,  
           “    2    King, Queen, Ten, X,



## 38 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Suit 3 King, Knave, X,  
" 4 X,

a No Trump should unquestionably be bid when Suit 1 is either Clubs or Diamonds, but should it be Spades or Hearts the suit is the bid, as the risk of having the adversaries save game by taking in five tricks with Suit 4 is too great to take with the game almost sure if the major suit be declared.

The situation varies materially, however, when the five-card major suit does not contain such great strength, and consequently there are many hands in which even the most expert declarer merely guesses when he makes his selection. Take such a holding as—

Spades	Ace, King, X,
Hearts	King, Knave, X, X, X,
Diamonds	King, Queen, Knave,
Clubs	Ten, X.

Should No Trump be bid, adverse Clubs may be run. Should Hearts be named,

the game is impossible if the partner be short in Hearts and too weak to take out a major suit call.

There are two types of hand, either of which the partner may hold. The first would result much more satisfactorily with Hearts than No Trump. The second produces exactly the opposite outcome. The following is an example of the first class:

Spades	X, X, X,
Hearts	Queen, X, X, X,
Diamonds	Ace, X, X, X,
Clubs	X, X.

The chances are that this combination would produce a game with Hearts, but that it would not do so with No Trumps.

Here is the opposite type:

Spades	X, X, X,
Hearts	X, X,
Diamonds	Ace, X, X, X,
Clubs	King, Queen, Ten, X.

This probably means a game with No Trumps but not with Hearts.

## 40 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

With the holding above given it is, therefore, at best a guess which is the winning bid. The Heart, however, tells the partner *that the hand contains No Trump assistance* and gives him a chance to make that bid if he have some strength in two other suits and short Hearts, but *the No Trump does not convey any Heart information*. It is therefore evident that a partner (no matter how skillful a bidder he may be) who holds the former of the two types of hands given above\* cannot rescue a No Trump by bidding two Hearts, but any sound Declarer holding the second of these hands will save the situation by bidding a No Trump over a Heart.† On the other hand, the No Trump has one distinct argument in its favor: any strength that the partner possesses will materially help it, whereas should the trump be bid the aid is mainly needed in one particular suit. Then, too, should the No Trump be named and an adversary

---

\* See page 39.

† See Third Hand Declarations, pages 131-137.

bid two Clubs,\* the chance is afforded by the call of two Hearts to place the partner in a most advantageous position, as he can bid two No Trump should he have Clubs stopped and lack Heart assistance, or allow the Heart bid to stand, should that declaration suit him better.†

The answer to these No Trump arguments is that when the partner has help for a No Trump but not for a Heart and yet is too weak to bid one No Trump over one Heart, the game is not probable with either declaration and, therefore, it is not vitally important which be chosen; further, that the probability that an adversary will bid two Clubs over so strong a No Trump is too remote to be seriously considered.

The verdict in this case would, therefore, seem to favor the Heart whenever the partner understands the science of modern partnership bidding. Should he, however, be a player of the old school

---

\* Not a very probable contingency.

† This is an example of the well-known principle of bidding, viz.: with two declarations, call the higher first. See page 78.

## 42      AUCTION DECLARATIONS

whose doctrine is that a partner's major suit should be let alone, or a weakling who cannot be trusted to either bid or play correctly, a No Trump would be the safer guess.

As the major suit becomes weaker the advantage of the No Trump declaration increases, provided the No Trump strength of the hand is as great as in the example given.

When all four suits are stopped, the No Trump is generally a wiser bid than a five-card major suit, unless the latter contains four honors or more than five cards.

As a general rule when in doubt whether to bid initially a major suit or a No Trump, the former is the safer declaration. It gives the partner the choice between that suit and a No Trump, the No Trump (unless it be overcalled by an adversary) does not afford him that opportunity.

### CASES IN WHICH TWO NO TRUMPS IS THE CORRECT INITIAL BID

Even with hands a trick or two stronger than the minimum No Trump require-

ment, an initial bid of more than one No Trump is rarely advisable, as it is important that the partner should be given the chance of making a minor suit rescue\* or a major suit strength showing† by a suit bid of two. With great general strength the bid of two No Trumps is unnecessary, as with a hand of this character the Declarer does not desire to preempt, it being more advantageous for him to tempt the adversaries to bid and then double. It is, therefore, only with an unusual holding that an initial call of more than one No Trump is advisable.

With a six-card solid minor suit and either an Ace or two well-guarded Kings, the call of two No Trumps is a sound preemptive declaration.

Bidding two No Trumps with four Aces, especially when one of them is a singleton or has but one small card with it, is a declaration that has recently grown in favor. As the adversaries cannot have

---

\* See pages 106-110.

† See pages 111-115.

## 44      AUCTION DECLARATIONS

a solid suit to run, they are not apt to double, and the chances are that the partner will be able to furnish some assistance. The declaration, therefore, may reasonably be expected to show a net gain, as even when it goes down one, it is still worth 50. In any case in which this contract is not fulfilled the chances are that one No Trump would have been successfully overbid by an adversary, so that the call of two may really prove to be profitable, even when but seven tricks are taken. Then too, there are some few exceptional deals in which two or three No Trumps can be made and yet the adversaries can take ten tricks with their suit the trump. Furthermore, there are some cases in which the shutting out of a lead-directing bid by the Fourth Hand is the determining factor in the success or failure of a No Trump declaration. For these reasons expert sentiment, which formerly opposed an initial two No Trump declaration by a holder of four Aces, is now distinctly in its favor.

An initial call of three No Trumps is only warranted by a most unusual hand. As bidding two will generally hold the declaration and involves less risk, three should not be ventured unless the bidder be sure that his hand both demands and justifies it. Any one of the hands given below would fully warrant such a declaration. Of course, it would be a most unusual adverse holding that could bid against such strength, but the sound Declarer, when he can do so without additional risk, protects himself against the unexpected as well as against the customary run of hands.

**HANDS WHICH JUSTIFY AN INITIAL  
BID OF THREE NO TRUMPS**

Spades	Ace,
Hearts	Ace,
Diamonds	Ace, X, X, X, X,
Clubs	Ace, King, Queen, Knave, X, X,
Spades	King, X,
Hearts	Ace,



## 46      **AUCTION DECLARATIONS**

Diamonds    Ace, King, X, X,

Clubs        Ace, King, Queen, X, X, X,

Spades      King, X,

Hearts      King, X,

Diamonds   Ace, Queen,

Clubs        Ace, King, Queen, X, X, X, X.

### III

## INITIAL SUIT DECLARATIONS

An initial suit bid of one serves a double purpose: it tells the partner—

- (a) That with the suit named the trump the hand has a reasonable expectation of taking at least four tricks.
- (b) That the hand will materially assist a No Trump, as it will take at least two high-card tricks and that the suit declared is easy to establish.

When the initial Declarer has a trickless hand outside of the trump suit, the minimum strength required for an initial suit bid is Ace, King and three others of the suit declared. With the suit named the trump this holding is estimated to be worth four tricks (two high-card and two low-card), while at a No Trump it assures at least two high-card tricks plus

## 48 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

whatever low-card tricks may be made by establishing the suit.

It goes without saying, that an initial suit bidder may have greater strength in the suit named or assistance on the side (quite possibly both). The above is merely the minimum requirement. A suit should not be declared initially without *both* the Ace and King unless it more than makes up for the deficiency by high-card strength in some other suit or suits. Even then, the hand must have *one* of the major honors with one additional honor in the suit named,\* and the side strength must include *one sure, quick trick*.†

The application of the above principle prohibits an initial suit declaration of

---

\* As a general rule, to justify an initial suit declaration one other honor should accompany either Ace or King. In the case of the King the other honor is essential; but with an Ace suit reasonable latitude is allowed. Unusual length (six or more) with the additional support above mentioned, or when holding Ace and four small, considerable strength in another suit (Ace and King, or Ace, Queen, Knave) would justify a call in the absence of the minor honor.

† Ace, King-Queen, King-Knave when the declared suit is headed by the Ace; when the King tops the suit the side strength should be Ace or King-Queen.

one with a long suit headed by a Queen or a lower card, although it is obviously possible for such a holding to be worth more tricks than some of the hands which unquestionably justify a bid of one.

This is because there is a great difference between a suit headed by one of the two major honors and one which it may take three rounds to establish and it is important that the partner be informed at once which character of declaration is being made. It cannot be questioned that such a holding as—

Spades	X,
Hearts	Queen, Ten, X, X, X, X,
	X,
Diamonds	X, X, X,
Clubs	Ace, King,

would take more tricks with Hearts the trump than a minimum strength Heart bid. But to help a No Trump, while it produces an “unexpected” Ace-King, it may not furnish a single low-card trick. On the other hand, even the

## 50      AUCTION DECLARATIONS

minimum holding that justifies a bid of one, viz:

Spades	X, X,
Hearts	Ace, King, X, X, X,
Diamonds	X, X, X,
Clubs	X, X, X,

without greater Heart assistance than X, X, from the partner is worth four tricks for a No Trump whenever the adverse Hearts are evenly divided and the first trick is allowed to go to the adversaries. The positive knowledge that the bidder has either the Ace or King may be invaluable for the partner when he has the other major honor and possibly additional assistance in the suit named; it may enable him to make a successful bid or double which otherwise would be too venturesome for a sound Declarer to risk.

Queen suits with strong support are of unquestioned value and should be shown because the declaration of such holdings often means game, but it is important to distinguish the bidding of these suits from

combinations headed by Ace or King, and this is easily accomplished by limiting the initial bid *of one* to the major honor combinations.

The bidding of a major suit headed by a Queen or lower card may be deferred until a later round, or an initial bid of more than one may be made.\* Initial preemptive suit declarations are bids of three or more and indicate the presence of Ace or King or both, so that it may be said that a bid of one in a major suit shows at least one of the major honors, a bid of two generally negatives such holding,† and a bid of three or more, as a rule, affirms it.

Returning to initial suit bids of one, it must be remembered that length is as essential as strength. As a general rule, a suit should not be called unless it contain at least five cards, but a bid with a four-card combination may be ventured with

---

\* When the hand is not strong enough to bid more than one it is not at all probable that all four players will pass.

This subject is fully covered under the head of "Initial Suit Bids of Two." See page 61.

† See page 63.

## 52 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

great strength such as Ace, King, Knave; Ace, Queen, Knave; or King, Queen, Knave, Ten in the suit, coupled with a side Ace. A four-card suit headed by Ace, King, Queen may be declared without other strength.

A suit that contains less than four cards should never be bid originally, regardless of its strength. Even the holding of Ace, King, Queen does not justify the naming of such a suit.\*

To summarize, the requirements for a suit bid of one, regardless of whether it be a major or minor, are:

- (a) Five or more headed by Ace *and* King.
- (b) Five or more headed by Ace *or* King with one other honor in the suit named plus another suit (short or long) headed by Ace or by King-Queen.
- (c) Four headed by Ace, King, Queen.
- (d) Four headed by Ace, King, Knave; Ace, Queen, Knave; or King,

---

\* See page 23, Note 4.

Queen, Knave, Ten and a side Ace.

In stating that an initial suit bid has exactly the same requirements as to length and strength whether it is made in a major or minor suit, it is only fair to mention that this is a subject upon which there is some difference in expert opinion. There are excellent authorities and eminent players who still believe that a difference should be made in the bidding of major and minor holdings. In other words, they still follow the theory that originated when Spades were worth two, Clubs four and Diamonds six per trick. In those days the bidding was entirely different. For example, it took six Clubs to overcall two No Trumps, and consequently a minor suit declaration was merely a high-card indication, the suit could not expect to compete with the No Trump and even in the isolated cases in which it was left in, the points that resulted did not, as a rule, appreciably aid the Declarer.



## 54 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Now, however, *Diamonds and Clubs* are as forceful pushers of an adverse No Trump as the major suits\* and quite frequently prove to be game winners.

A suit valued at four with a No Trump worth twelve was impotent to overcall three No Trumps even by contracting to make a Grand Slam. Now in either minor a bid of four will overcall the formerly impregnable three No Trumps and both of these suits frequently furnish otherwise unattainable games for those who appreciate their value, while the opportunity to bid them to the limit often drives adverse No Trump and major suit bids upon the rocks of disaster.

The ability to fully avail himself of the opportunities that the minor suits at present afford is one of the best tests of the skill of a Declarer. It frequently happens that a bid of four in a minor suit is left in because it cannot go game and because the opponent fears his major bid of four would fail and yet game in the major would

---

\* They are also as forceful as a Heart for pushing a Spade.

have been made. It is simple figuring to show that in such a case the minor bid of four makes a difference of approximately 200 points in the first or second game of a rubber, and of approximately 325 points in a rubber game.\*

### **WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO MAKE LENGTH ESSENTIAL IN AN INITIAL MINOR BID**

The skilled minor suit Declarer accomplishes four results quite impossible for the bidder who initially calls minors regardless of their length:

- (1) He wins some games with his minor declarations that he would never otherwise score.
- (2) He induces adverse bidders to undertake contracts which they cannot fulfil.
- (3) He is left in with declarations which, while they cannot go game, produce some return in deals in which the adversaries

---

\* See pages 179-181.

## 56 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

would otherwise have gone game or have netted a good score.

- (4) He does not place his partner in an embarrassing position by compelling him to take out all initial minor suit bids.

A little consideration will show why it is that length is now almost as essential in a minor bid as in a major. There are many instances in which the partner cannot bid No Trump over an initial minor. The adversaries may have declared a suit in which he is quite defenceless, or his hand may be much better adapted for supporting the suit named than for shifting. In all such cases it is absolutely vital for him to be sure that the original call has been made with length. There are numerous occasions in which it is of the greatest importance for the success of the partnership that a minor suit should be bid to the limit, but when any doubt exists in the mind of the partner concerning the length of the original bid he dare

not avail himself of what would otherwise be a most effective opportunity.

Should the initial Declarer open with one Club, his opponents bid Spades to a high figure, and his partner hold—

Spades	None,
Hearts	X, X, X,
Diamonds	Ace, King, X, X, X, X,
Clubs	Ace, Queen, X, X,

the result is practically sure to be a Slam in Clubs,\* regardless of what the opening lead may be, and the partner of the initial Declarer would be perfectly justified in declaring six Clubs and redoubling if doubled, provided always, that he have confidence in the soundness of that initial bid.

Numerous examples of the same general character may be given and in actual play such situations occur more frequently than might be expected. Deals in which the partner of an initial minor suit bidder has length in that minor suit

---

\* The initial Declarer having bid a Club without the Ace is marked with a side Ace or King-Queen.

## 58 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

and a suit to ruff, appear with more or less regularity. Such hands are most valuable when their holder can be sure that the initial Declarer had length, but when it is possible that the initial bid has been made with a short suit, and that four or five trumps may be banked in an adverse hand, the partner dare not materially advance the minor suit and all the advantage of the situation is lost.

Even after the adoption of the present count, but before the incorporation in the code of the popular scheme permitting any numerically higher bid to overcall any lower, there was still some reason for treating the minor suits merely as No Trump stepping stones, because even then they could not compete so effectually with the higher declarations. Now the bidder who fails to realize that he can force up a No Trump or Spade as well with a minor as with a Heart does not appreciate all the opportunities of the modern game.

If a minor suit may be bid as a No

Trump invitation with such a hand as—

Spades	X, X, X, X,
Hearts	King, X, X, X,
Diamonds	Ace, King,
Clubs	X, X, X,

it is obvious that the partner must always take out an initial minor bid of one. In the case above cited should he have some such holding as this:

Spades	Queen, X, X, X,
Hearts	X, X, X,
Diamonds	X,
Clubs	Knave, X, X, X, X,

what is he to do? A forced take-out is always full of danger unless the Declarer who requires it has ample strength to protect it. When a take-out is forced by the bid of a short Ace-King there is certainly little protection and no opportunity to escape a heavy penalty when the partner is weak and the adversaries determine to double.

## 60 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

The risk might well be worth taking if there were any material gain in sight when the bid works advantageously, but there is not. Any hand which the partner can possibly hold which would go game with the assistance of a short Ace-King plus even an Ace or King on the side\* would be bid by him even after an initial pass so the advantage of the call is not marked. There is just one very infrequent situation in which a short minor bid works well, viz: where the opponent to the left has a preemptive bid which would shut out the partner after a pass but not after a bid. This, however, occurs so infrequently that it is not of serious importance.

---

\* Anything much stronger is in itself a No Trump. See page 22.

## IV

### INITIAL SUIT BIDS OF TWO

Initial suit bids of two were formerly classed as preemptive declarations. This was quite correct because in those days the principal object of the bidder was to shut out an adverse call. Now, however, it is generally appreciated that to preempt successfully more than two must be declared and that bids of two should be made mainly with the intent of giving information. It is true that even a bid of two may preempt, especially when it is made in the Spade suit, but this is merely an advantageous incident of the declaration, not by any means its real object.

An initial bid of two in a Minor suit conveys a different meaning from a call of two in a Major.

### AN INITIAL BID OF TWO IN A MINOR

The Minor bid of two shows exactly one holding and nothing else. It is, therefore,



## 62 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

the most informatory declaration of modern Auction. It announces that the Declarer has a long solid suit ready to run and invites two No Trumps from the partner whenever with this information his holding justifies the call.

As it requires *two* No Trumps to accept the invitation, and as, if the partner be too weak to venture so exacting a contract, the bid may stand, it should not be made unless the suit be solid beyond peradventure. Ace, King, Queen, X, X is not sufficiently safe to justify this declaration.\* This holding, at best only five tricks, is too frequently stopped by the adversaries to make it wise to initially declare more than one with it. Ace, King, Queen, X, X, X, however, is very different and is a sound two bid. Ace, King, Queen, Knave, X, when accompanied by a side King, is generally considered as warranting a declaration of two.

Of course, these remarks apply to Minor

---

\* With a side Ace this hand would be one No Trump. See page 32.

suits only. A bid of two in a Major shows a very different holding.

### AN INITIAL BID OF TWO IN A MAJOR

To warrant an initial bid of two in a Major suit the hand should contain six probable tricks. This bid indicates a holding which, with some help from the partner, will probably win the game provided that the deal is played with the initial bid the trump. It is distinctly not a no trump invitation. The partner is strenuously urged, if able to advance the declaration, to do so only in the suit initially declared.

All that this declaration guarantees for the partner's No Trump is considerable length in the suit named, although to make up its six tricks it probably has some other strength.

For a long time it was considered the best policy for an initial Declarer with a hand of this character to first pass and then to show his holding on the next round, thus clearly marking the character of his

## 64 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

hand. It was properly argued that with a hand of this kind the bid is rarely passed by all four players and that this method clearly distinguishes it from a strong hand weakly attempting to preempt.

Now, however, experience has proven the danger of this theory. The preempting bids have become a most important part of the declaration and players have learned that when it is advisable to preempt at all it should be done to the limit. Therefore, a hand which could properly, as an initial declaration, bid two Hearts may be shut out by an adverse preemptive three Spades, and yet the partner may be able to help the Hearts sufficiently to ensure winning the game.

For example, the Dealer holds—

Spades	X,
Hearts	Queen, Knave, Ten, X, X, X,
Diamonds	Ace, Knave, X, X,
Clubs	X, X.

Should he pass and the Second Hand call three Spades, it would be very dangerous

for the dealer to bid four Hearts without knowing that his partner can assist, and yet his partner may readily have sufficient strength to ensure game and yet be unable to bid. If he have such a hand as—

Spades	X, X, X,
Hearts	Ace, X, X,
Diamonds	King, Queen, X,
Clubs	X, X, X, X,

and the Heart King be in the Second Hand, four Hearts would almost surely be the result.

It is evident, therefore, that to avoid being preempted out of a declaration it is wise to bid on the first round.

While, as a general rule, a Major bid of two may be said to negative the presence of the Ace or King of the suit declared, there are many hands containing one or the other with which a bid of two is sound because there is not sufficient strength to bid more and to call one might bring an undesired No Trump from the partner.

## 66 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

For example:

Spades	King, Ten, X, X, X, X,
Hearts	None,
Diamonds	King, Queen, Ten, X,
Clubs	X, X, X.

To justify a call of two the hand must appear to be far more valuable with the suit named the trump than at No Trump,\* and must also be unable to materially help the other Major suit.

It is a serious yet common mistake for a Declarer to open with a bid of more than one of a Major suit when he has strength in the other. This almost surely prevents the partner from naming the other suit and may shut out an otherwise easy game.

Should a Declarer have—

Spades	Ace, Queen, X, X,
Hearts	King, Queen, Ten, X, X, X,

---

\* With a hand which might be much better at No Trump, two of a Major suit should not be called. For example:

Spades	Ace, King, X, X, X,
Hearts	Queen, X,
Diamonds	King, X, X,
Clubs	Ace, King, X,

is fully strong enough for two Spades, but is not a hand with which to warn a partner not to bid No Trump.

Diamonds	X,
Clubs	X, X.

The hand is strong enough to bid three Hearts at the start, yet the strength in Spades eliminates the main reason for a preemptive bid. The fact that the partner may have long Spades, which would make that suit a more desirable trump, should reduce the Heart bid to one.

The partner may have some such holding as—

Spades	King, Ten, X, X, X,
Hearts	None,
Diamonds	Ace, X, X,
Clubs	X, X, X, X, X.

In that case a game might be quite impossible in Hearts yet easy in Spades and a bid of more than one Heart would prove a veritable boomerang.

It is a sound rule, therefore, never to bid more than one of a Major suit when strong in the other. With this doctrine followed the partner of the initial Declarer

## 68      **AUCTION DECLARATIONS**

even if quite strong\* in the other Major suit should not call it over a bid of two or more as he knows that he will receive no help in it. As the adversaries also know that the unnamed Major is the suit that the initial Declarer is trying to shut out, there is always a good chance that one of them, without great strength, may venture to declare it hoping that his own partner holds the balance of the suit. This situation affords the opportunity for an ideal double.

### **AN INITIAL SUIT BID OF MORE THAN TWO IS A PREEMPTIVE DECLARATION**

An initial bid of more than two, either in a Major or Minor suit, is a preemptive declaration and indicates that the Declarer has good reason to expect that he will win the game should that suit be the trump. It also incidentally indicates that the Declarer is very weak in some other direction and is trying to shut out some par-

---

\* Four honors with six in suit would doubtless warrant taking such a liberty.

ticular bid. With considerable general strength, preempting is not necessary or advisable.

A few words upon the subject may be appropriate here.

The player who bids four and makes four does not score more than the player who bids one and makes four, and his risk is much greater. It is, therefore, foolish to bid more than one unless there be some object to accomplish by the bid which warrants the increased hazard.

The preemptive bid has five such objects:

- (1) It gives valuable information to the partner regarding the number of tricks the hand can take with a certain trump.
- (2) It may prevent an adverse bid which could go game.
- (3) It may prevent an adverse bid which, if made, would direct a lead most advantageous to the opponents.
- (4) It may prevent an adverse bid which, if made, would be



## 70 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

advanced by the partner of its maker to such a height that the declaration of the initial Declarer will fail.

- (5) It may induce the opponents to make an unwarranted bid they would not otherwise attempt and consequently produce a heavy penalty that could not otherwise be obtained.

Preemptive bids are a development of recent years. Under the old count they were not effective, but as soon as real values were accorded to the different suits they became an important part of the declaration. The recent increase in the comparative bidding value of the Minor suits has still further accentuated the importance, whenever the bid be justified, of preempting with a Major suit; as Minor suit opposition should be shut out whenever possible.

Preemptive declarers now realize that to fully gather the benefits of the bid the Declarer must have his nerve with him

and plunge into deep water at the start. It often happens that a preemptive bid, which should accomplish its purpose, fails merely because the bidder was too conservative and did not make his first bid sufficiently high. When an initial Declarer has a preempting hand which justifies a call of four (*i. e.*, nine tricks plus possibilities) he is foolish to "play it safe" by bidding at the start only the sure thing.

A real preempting hand contains an unusual distribution of cards, and when one hand has this the others are apt to be similarly constituted. The chances are, therefore, that a bid of two will be promptly overcalled, and once that happens the main object of the declaration is lost. An initial three or four is much more apt to stand and may in the end be cheaper, as otherwise the partner, if he have support, may be forced to four or five. Furthermore, an initial bid of more than two at once earmarks itself and is not confused by the partner with the conventional bid of two.

## 72      AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Of course, it is very easy to extol the advantages of a preemptive bid, but, like other good things in Auction, the hand which warrants it is a gift of the fickle goddess and the mere making of the bid does not produce the cards that justify it or the situation that causes it to be beneficial. A sound preemptive bid is made with a hand which either in itself insures game if the bid stand or which, to accomplish that purpose, requires little help from the partner. It may be made in a Minor suit, but the player who does this assumes a grave responsibility as he tells his partner not to shift to a higher valued declaration unless in that he be practically certain of game. As it takes eleven tricks in a Minor to score game while ten and nine accomplish the same purpose in a Major and No Trump respectively, it will be seen that a Declarer must be indeed sure of his ground who takes the responsibility of shutting off a partner's bid that may reach the goal by a shorter route.

The large majority of preemptive bids are, therefore, made in a Major suit. To justify the declaration the hand must contain:

1. A most distinct probability of game if the bid stand.
2. Great length and strength in the suit bid.
3. Shortness and weakness in the other Major suit.
4. The number of tricks that appear in the following table:

**NUMBER OF TRICKS NECESSARY FOR  
A PREEMPTIVE BID.**

To justify any preemptive bid the hand of its maker must be able, provided the bid be not overcalled, to meet the following requirements as to its trick-taking power:

A bid of two shows six tricks.

A bid of three shows seven tricks plus potent probabilities.

## 74 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

A bid of four shows nine tricks plus possibilities.

A bid of five shows eleven practically sure tricks.

An example showing the value of preempting, when the conditions warrant it, follows:

The Dealer holds—

Spades	Ace, King, Knave, Ten, X, X,
Hearts	None,
Diamonds	X, X,
Clubs	King, Queen, Knave, Ten, X.

The Second Hand has—

Spades	X,
Hearts	King, Queen, Ten, X, X,
Diamonds	Ace, X, X, X, X,
Clubs	X, X.

The Third Hand has—

Spades	Queen, X, X,
Hearts	Knave, X, X,
Diamonds	X, X, X,
Clubs	X, X, X, X.

The Fourth Hand has—

Spades	X, X, X,
Hearts	Ace, X, X, X, X,
Diamonds	King, Queen, X,
Clubs	Ace, X.

In this deal the Dealer and partner can make four odd in Spades; their opponents a small slam in Hearts. If the Hearts are once mentioned by either adversary, the other will advance them until the Spades are overbid or forced to a contract they cannot fulfil. The Dealer's only chance is to preempt so liberally that his first bid holds the declaration. A call of two will not accomplish this, three may, four surely will. The hand has sufficient strength to justify a bid of four and that bid ensures a game otherwise unobtainable.

The case of a preemptive bid placing an adversary in an awkward position is most common. The Dealer opens with three Spades and the Second Hand holds—

## 76 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Spades	None,
Hearts	Ace, Queen, X, X, X, X,
Diamonds	Ace, Knave, X, X, X,
Clubs	X, X.

He knows that the preemptive bid has been made with Spade and Club strength to shut out Hearts, that it will probably go game in Spades, and that should he fail to bid his partner will certainly have to pass. He realizes that should his partner have but a very little assistance at the right spots, such a hand as—

Spades	X, X, X,
Hearts	King, X, X,
Diamonds	Queen, Ten, X,
Clubs	X, X, X, X,

he would make four or five odd in Hearts and that the Ace of Clubs in the partner's hand added to the above would probably produce a small slam.

But the reverse of the picture is just as apt to be the side he must face. His partner may have a bust and the Third Hand may hold—

Spades	X, X,
Hearts	King, Knave, X, X,
Diamonds	King, Queen, Ten, X,
Clubs	X, X, X,

which would mean being set to the tune of 500 or more.

While these examples may be a bit unusual, such hands do occur with greater frequency than would seem probable and they add to the advantage of the emphatic preemptor by seriously embarrassing his adversaries. The adversary is surely placed in a most unpleasant position when he knows a bid may give him the game with a big score as an added premium or may cost a 500 penalty.



## V

### THE INITIAL BID WITH A TWO SUIT HAND

When the skilled initial Declarer has two suits, *both of which are long and strong enough to declare*, he is placed in a most enviable position not merely because he has a hand much stronger than the average but because his holding is one which readily adapts itself to the principles of modern scientific bidding and affords him the opportunity, should his partner be of the first class, to obtain the maximum result from the combined hands.

Formerly the importance of showing both suits and letting the partner determine which should be played was not generally appreciated. Players when deciding which of two suits to bid, chose the lower so that, in the event of a double, an escape without increasing the bid was possible. During the last few years, however, players have realized that bids of

one are not doubled, except for informatory purposes, and that a double of that character is rarely allowed to stand; consequently the only argument in favor of bidding the lower suit first no longer exists.

Furthermore, now that Minor suit bids are not of necessity taken out by the partner, the declaration of a lower valued suit from a hand that contains a Major of equal strength is an unnecessary risk, as the first bid may stand. The partner may be able to render at least equal assistance to the higher valued suit, and the failure to name it may cost a game in the event of the combined hands being worth just ten tricks. There is, however, one paramount reason which influences the expert Declarer of today with a two-suit hand to bid first the higher and later on (if possible) the lower, and that is that this method of declaring enables an interchange, between his partner and himself, of information invaluable to both players.

After an initial bidder has called two

## 80 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

suits, first the higher and next the lower, his partner is able *when strong*—

- (a) To advance the suit which seems more apt to produce a game.
- (b) To bid a No Trump if weak in both suits named but with stoppers in the other two.
- (c) To double if the adversaries bid too rashly.

*When weak* the partner without increasing the contract may accurately designate which of the two suits his hand is the better able to assist.

The partner shows his preference after the second bid by either passing or returning to the suit named first, which he can, of course, do with a bid for the same number of tricks. This action does not indicate strength; merely a preference.

For example, Dealer holds—

Spades	Ace, Queen, Ten, X, X,
Hearts	King, Queen, Knave, X, X,
Diamonds	X, X,
Clubs	X.

He should start with one Spade; let us suppose that after two passes the Fourth Hand bids two Diamonds, the initial Declarer calls two Hearts and the Second Hand again passes. The opportunity of the partner now arrives. When he is strong in Spades and weak in Hearts his bid of two Spades is most obvious, but the same principle applies even when the choice is not seemingly important. With three small Spades and two small Hearts or with an equal number in each suit, but the Spades the higher, the bid should be made. A pass under such conditions means "I prefer Hearts." A bid of two Spades means merely "I prefer Spades."

**The bid does not show greater strength in Spades than the pass does in Hearts.**

With the hand above mentioned the initial Declarer, having named two suits, has registered his full strength. Regardless of whether or not his partner has advanced the declaration from two Hearts to two Spades, he should not again declare if overbid by an opponent, but should

## 82 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

give his partner the option of determining whether their suit should be carried higher.

With a stronger holding of both Majors, which would, without assistance from the partner, justify the initial Declarer in bidding three or even four over a Minor bid made by the adversary to the left, the same principle of bidding the lower after the first round should be followed so that the partner can change without increasing the size of the contract.

For example, the dealer holds—

Spades	Ace, King, Queen, X, X,
Hearts	Ace, King, Queen, X, X,
Diamonds	None,
Clubs	X, X, X.

He bids one Spade\* Second Hand and partner pass. Fourth Hand bids Three Diamonds, Dealer Three Hearts, Second Hand Four Diamonds, Partner and Fourth Hand pass. It is now imperative for the

---

\* With a two-suit hand a preemptive declaration should never be made, as giving the partner the choice between the two suits is the most important duty of the Declarer and by bidding more than one initially he decreases the probability of his having a chance to bid again.

Dealer, should he determine to bid four, to select Hearts and not Spades. The partner has declined to advance either declaration but he has not had the opportunity of making a choice between the two; he may have four low cards of one suit and but one or two of the other. The suit in which he is short may be stopped by an adversary. Fulfilling the contract and winning the game may depend upon the right trump being selected. The partner can change from Hearts to Spades without increasing the contract but to shift from Spades to Hearts would require a bid of Five.

This principle of declaration may be carried even further. If in the example hand on page 80 after the call of one Spade the Second Hand should bid two Diamonds, the partner two Spades, the Fourth Hand three Diamonds, the proper bid of the Dealer would be three Hearts, although he knows that his partner can surely help the Spades and may not have a Heart in his hand. Under such cir-

## 84 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

cumstances the Dealer, having been aided by his partner, is amply justified in continuing the bidding and the shift to the Hearts does not indicate a preference for that suit; it merely shows the character of the hand. This should be done only when the partner can be depended upon to understand that the shift means nothing more than the leaving of the decision to him.

There is a chance that the partner helped the original bid with some such hand as—

Spades	King, X,
Hearts	Ace, Ten, X, X,
Diamonds	X, X,
Clubs	Queen, Knave, Ten, X, X,

in which case an adversary might have Knave, X, X, X, in Spades and the game sure with Hearts might be quite unobtainable with Spades.

Perhaps in only one case out of ten a partner who has helped Spades will prefer Hearts, but in that one case he should be

given the chance to show his preference by passing the Heart instead of making the expected Spade overcall.

One word of caution may be advisable before leaving this subject. A player who shows two suits, the higher first, *guarantees to his partner that he has an initial bid in both.* That, being in doubt as to which declaration is the better for the combined hands, he leaves the decision to the partner, who virtually has the entire twenty-six cards before him.

On this basis the partner assumes the control of the situation after the second bid of the initial Declarer. With his knowledge of his own hand and the accurate information afforded him by the initial Declarer, he can bid or double with comparative safety.

When an initial Declarer, guilty of over-enthusiasm, names two suits, the higher first, and one of them is not *long enough and strong enough* for an initial call, he fully deserves his share of the disaster that is apt to result. So many "Auction



accidents" of this character have occurred that initial Declarers should now thoroughly appreciate the principle that two suits must not be shown unless *both* are strong enough to declare. When this practice is followed the two-suit showing is of the greatest value.

Bidding two suits, calling the lower valued first, when the strength and length are really in the higher suit, may possibly for the time being embarrass an adversary but it is apt to more seriously disconcert the partner. The exponents of this kind of bidding may succeed temporarily against weak opponents, but in the long run they lose much more than they gain.

When a scientific bidder names a higher valued suit after starting with a lower, he announces that his great strength is in the lower, but that he has length in the higher and is calling it in case his partner has strength in it; if not, he desires his partner to return to the lower, in which he has such length and strength that the advance of one in the size of the contract does not matter.

## VI

### SECOND HAND DECLARATIONS

All Second Hand bids may be divided into two classes: those made after a pass by the Dealer and those made after the Dealer has declared. The former are initial declarations and have been considered under that head, so all that remains to be discussed in this chapter is what the Second Hand should do after a bid by the Dealer.

Under such conditions the Second Hand knows that this may be his last opportunity to declare. It is, therefore, what is termed a "forced" declaration, differing from the "free" initial bid heretofore considered. The forced bid does not indicate the presence of any certain cards; for example, the Dealer bids one Heart and the Second Hand holds—

Spades	Queen, Knave, Ten, X, X,
Hearts	X,

## 88      AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Diamonds	King, Queen, Knave, X,
Clubs	X, X, X.

He cannot pass with the idea of showing his suit later, as he may not have the chance to bid again; he dare not call two Spades, as he lacks the requisite strength and furthermore does not want to keep his partner from bidding a No Trump should the partner have the Hearts well stopped and be weak in Spades.

A forced declaration, therefore, does not of necessity show any specific high cards and consequently is not as informative as an initial bid. It does, however, show that the hand contains a certain number of tricks with the suit named the trump. Over an adverse suit bid of one, to call one of a higher valued suit shows four sure tricks, plus possibilities; to call two of a lower valued suit shows five sure tricks, plus possibilities.

### AFTER A NO TRUMP

When the Dealer has called No Trump and the holding of the Second Hand is

of such character that he expects to keep the No Trump from going game, he should not declare unless convinced that the bid he contemplates will not guide his adversaries into a Major suit declaration with which they may score the game. Therefore, he should pass with a solid Minor suit, or for that matter with a solid Major, unless it be sufficiently supported by side strength so that game with it is probable, provided the partner render some assistance. So also with a five-card King, Queen, Knave suit and one quick reentry.

On the other hand, in these days of light No Trumpers the initial bid may have been made without great strength and the partner may have the balance of the high cards, so that even a Minor suit bid may mean game. Therefore, with hands which do not ensure saving game if the No Trump stand or which indicate that the game is not in serious danger should the adversaries shift to a Major, a bid is often advisable. This is a situation for which it is difficult to

## 90 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

frame hard and fast rules and in which the best judgment of the player must be exercised.

It is rarely safe to declare a suit of less than five cards over an adverse No Trump and the bid should not be made without six probable tricks. A few examples may clarify, to some extent, this complicated proposition.

### SECOND HAND HOLDINGS, DEALER HAVING BID NO TRUMP

Spades	X, X.....	} Should not bid.
Hearts	X, X.....	
Diamonds	X, X, X.....	
Clubs	Ace, King, Queen, Knave, Ten, X.....	

Spades	X.....	} Should not bid.
Hearts	X, X.....	
Diamonds	King, Queen, Knave, X, X, X.....	
Clubs	Ace, Knave, X, X.....	

Spades	X.....	} Should not bid.
Hearts	King, Queen, Knave, X, X.....	
Diamonds	Ace, X, X.....	
Clubs	X, X, X, X.....	

Spades	Ace, King, Knave, X, X	} Should bid.
Hearts	King, Knave, X,.....	
Diamonds	X.....	
Clubs	X, X, X, X.....	

Spades	King, Knave, X.....	} Should bid.
Hearts	King, Ten, X, X.....	
Diamonds	King, Queen, Knave, X, X, X.....	
Clubs	None.....	

### WHEN THE SECOND HAND ALSO HAS A NO TRUMP

An interesting situation arises when, as often happens, the Second Hand also has a No Trumper.

If he pass, the one No Trump is practically sure to stand and should the balance of the strength be in his partner's

## 92 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

hand he may get a paltry 50 or 100 but lose an opportunity to win the game.

If he bid two No Trumps and his partner have a "bust," he is apt to be severely penalized.

If, however, he make a double, which being a double of one is an "informatory" not a "business" double,\* he tells his partner, "I have a hand with which I would have bid two No Trumps had this safer declaration not been available. I wish you to take out my double by bidding two No Trumps or two of your best suit, as you may prefer, unless you are so strong that you are satisfied that by allowing the double to stand we will secure a penalty worth more than the game."

The double is far safer than bidding two No Trumps unless the hand contain eight sure tricks and it possesses every advantage of the two No Trump call, as

---

\* All doubles of a bid of one are informative and are made with the expectation that they will be taken out by the partner. All doubles of a bid of more than one are business or revenue doubles and are made with the expectation of being left in and of gaining a satisfactory penalty.

it is always possible to go to that declaration later, if the partner's bid make it advisable to do so.

*A Second Hand who with less than eight tricks bids two No Trumps over one No Trump takes a most unnecessary risk.* His partner cannot rescue and he may go down as many hundred as his hand falls short of eight tricks. It is a bid which may lose but which cannot gain. But the double is different; the partner, even with a bust, generally has a suit which, if it be the trump, is worth one or two tricks, which, plus the five or more tricks in the doubling hand, makes it improbable that his suit call of two will be expensive.

It is quite true that this double of one No Trump is so tempting that often it is grossly abused. A player with a light No Trumper which contains at best three or four tricks, doubles, finds his partner with a bust and is surprised by an Ace or King on his left that he expected to be on his right. As a result he loses heavily and blames the declaration.



## 94 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

A system should not, however, be abandoned by the sound bidder because it is at times misused by rash declarers. The informatory double is a winning declaration if used only when the bidder would otherwise call two No Trumps; that is, with at least five sure tricks, when over the No Trump Declarer, and with six sure tricks, plus potent probabilities when these positions are reversed, *i. e.*, when bid by a player who is on the right of the No Trump and whose partner has passed the No Trump.\*

The double is especially advantageous when the doubler has strength in the two Majors. A few examples follow:

### SECOND HAND HOLDINGS, DEALER HAVING BID NO TRUMP

Spades	Ace, X.....	} Should pass.
Hearts	X, X, 'X.....	
Diamonds	Ace, Queen, X, X.....	
Clubs	Ace, X, X, X.....	

---

\* The partner having passed, this declaration should not be made without unusual strength. The six tricks should be estimated upon the basis of all missing high cards being on the bidder's left.

Spades	Ace, Knave, X, X.....	} Should double.*
Hearts	King, Queen, Ten.....	
Diamonds	Ace, X, X.....	
Clubs	X, X, X.....	

Spades	Ace, King, Queen, X...	} Should double.
Hearts	Ace, Queen, Knave, X	
Diamonds	King, X.....	
Clubs	King, X, X.....	

Spades	King, X.....	} Should bid two No Trumps.
Hearts	Ace, X, X.....	
Diamonds	King, Queen, X.....	
Clubs	Ace, King, Queen, Knave, X.....	

### WHEN TO BID NO TRUMP OVER A SUIT

To justify bidding one No Trump over an adverse initial suit the Second Hand must have better than a border line No Trump. The first essential is that he have the suit stopped and when it is stopped but once, at least four other quick tricks must be in sight. When it is stopped twice there should be three other

---

\* Should pass if Fourth Hand.

## 96      **AUCTION DECLARATIONS**

tricks in the hand, but they need not of necessity be quick.

When the declared suit is stopped but once and the hand has a sound suit declaration it is much better, as a rule, to start with it, especially, if it be a Major. When the suit declared is not stopped a No Trump should not be bid, as doing so informs the partner that the suit is stopped and authorizes him upon that supposition to carry the No Trump declaration to whatever height his hand warrants.

### **WHEN TO DOUBLE A SUIT BID OF ONE**

With considerable strength in the other three suits but without a stopper in the declared suit, a double (not a No Trump) is the proper declaration. This tells the partner exactly what the hand contains and enables him to bid No Trump if he have the declared suit safely stopped; if not, to declare his long suit knowing that it will receive able support. When the partner becomes the Declarer the first lead comes up to instead of through him,

as it would should the Second Hand risk a No Trump. This may enable him to stop an adverse suit against which he would otherwise be helpless and may make a No Trump successful which would fail if declared by the Second Hand.

This double should not be made without real strength in each of the three suits, it should guarantee at least five tricks for the partner's declaration, whatever it may be.\*

A few examples follow:

## SECOND HAND HOLDINGS, DEALER HAVING BID ONE HEART

Spades	Ace, X, X.....	} Should pass.
Hearts	X, X.....	
Diamonds	Ace, X, X, X....	
Clubs	Ace, X, X, X....	

Spades	Ace, Knave, X..	} Should double.
Hearts	X, X.....	
Diamonds	King, Queen, X, X	
Clubs	Ace, Ten, X, X..	

---

\* It may also be made by a Fourth Hand with the same amount of strength.

## 98 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Spades	Ace, King, X, X..	} Should double, but if partner bids two Diamonds should overcall with Clubs.
Hearts	X.....	
Diamonds	King, X.....	
Clubs	Ace, King, Queen, X, X, X.....	

Spades	Ace, King, X, X, X.....	} Should bid one Spade and if two Hearts are called by initial Declarer should bid three Clubs.
Hearts	X.....	
Diamonds	King, X.....	
Clubs	Ace, King, Queen, X, X.....	

### DECLARATIONS SUBSEQUENT TO A DOUBLE OF ONE

In this connection it may not be out of place to refer to declarations subsequent to a double of one, regardless of whether it be a No Trump or suit that has been doubled. When a player makes this informatory double he forces his partner to bid and he cannot rely upon the take-out to show strength. He should, therefore, leave the subsequent bidding to the partner.

There have been some ingenious theories advanced suggesting, as defences against these doubles, redoubles by the partner of

the initial Declarer, when he has better than average strength. The advocates of such redoubles fail to realize that whenever three such bids are justified three hands have strength and the fourth—the hand forced to bid—must be very weak. Forcing him to bid places him in a most embarrassing position. Why relieve an adversary from his dilemma by redoubling? This allows him to pass, thereby exposing the situation to the doubler and permitting that player to take himself out. It is much more effective, under such conditions, for the partner of the initial Declarer to mask his strength and await developments. The only hand with which he should act is the unusual one with which, regardless of what may happen, he intends, sooner or later, to advance the bid of his partner. In that case he should at once bid two of his partner's declaration and thus probably prevent the indication, by the bid of his left hand adversary, of the suit which it would be most advantageous for the right hand adversary to open.

## VII

### THIRD HAND DECLARATIONS

The Third Hand is called upon to declare under four different conditions, viz:

(a) After two passes.

(b) After a pass by Dealer and a bid by Second Hand.

(c) After two bids.

(d) After a bid by Dealer and a pass by Second Hand.

#### AFTER TWO PASSES

Under these conditions the Third Hand really becomes the first Declarer, but the call he then makes is not an initial declaration because it is materially affected by three considerations which do not concern an initial Declarer, viz:

- (1) A partner who has passed should not be counted upon for the same amount of strength that may be

expected from a player who has not yet had an opportunity to declare.

- (2) The adverse strength is apparently banked to the left of the Third Hand, which militates against the success of any declaration he may make.
- (3) Unless the Third Hand have great strength it is probable that the final declaration will be made on his left. It, therefore, is advisable, when he has a suit that he desires his partner to lead, for him to indicate it by a bid.

All these considerations so materially change the situation that the viewpoint of the Third Hand is radically different from that of a Dealer or Second Hand making an initial declaration.

To bid a Class A or Class C No Trump\* the Third Hand should have at least one trick greater strength than would be

---

\* See pages 22-28.



## 102 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

required for an initial declaration, but without any specific number of tricks he may bid a suit that he desires his partner to lead should the expected No Trump be called to his left. This, being a bid of one, is not apt to be doubled\* and it must be understood by the partner to be a lead-indicator, not a trick-indicator. To postpone the lead-indicating bid until after the No Trump would require a bid of more than one, which might not be safe, so it is customary to make it at once and the partner is not expected to accord to it any significance other than that the bidder has a holding in the suit which makes him anxious to have it led at once.

A preemptive bid is distinctly advisable whenever the Third Hand has a suit of such length and strength that with it the trump, a game seems reasonably probable, in spite of the Dealer's pass. Such a bid does not show Aces or Kings or negative them; it merely guarantees that the

---

\* Except a temporary double for informatory purposes. See pages 96-98.

declaring hand will take at least within one of the number of tricks bid. This is comparatively safe, because even a partner who has passed may be expected to help to the extent of one trick.

### **AFTER A PASS BY DEALER AND A BID BY SECOND HAND**

This situation is much the same as that of the Second Hand after a Dealer's bid,\* the only difference being that in the former case the partner is an unknown quantity, while in this he has already passed. Therefore, at least one trick more is required to justify a bid.

### **AFTER TWO BIDS**

In this situation the Third Hand is forced to answer the question which constantly arises later in the declaration, viz: Have I sufficient strength to advance my partner's declaration, or, in other words, have I more assistance than he counted upon when he made his bid?

---

\* See page 87.

## 104 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

This subject is considered under the head of "The Bidding Subsequent to the First Round."\* It deserves the best attention of every player.

### AFTER A BID BY DEALER AND A PASS BY SECOND HAND

When the Dealer has bid, the Second Hand has passed and the Third Hand has strength, the winning of the game is most probable and the declaration of the Third Hand should be subservient to that object. Both hands are strong and the game is in sight; it is therefore much better to be playing a bid of three or four in a declaration that will produce game than to fulfil a smaller contract which does not accomplish that result. There should be no hesitation shown and no apologies are due when one partner overcalls the other or when the first Declarer outbids the overcall, provided, of course, that every bid has a sound reason to justify it.

The science of partnership bidding is

---

\* See page 144.

to select finally the declaration which the partners would choose with their combined knowledge had they the privilege of examining the twenty-six cards belonging to the partnership. This should be accomplished in a large percentage of hands by bidders of average ability, while with experts a record of very nearly one hundred per cent should be reached. The only way to do this is to use a most thorough system of overcalling whereby each partner shows to the other, as nearly as possible, the contents of his hand.

### **OVERCALLING THE PARTNER'S NO TRUMP**

A question which has properly occasioned more discussion than any other Auction problem is with what holdings a player should overcall his partner's No Trump. This is possibly the most doubtful as well as the most important question upon which there is still considerable difference of opinion.

## 106 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

It arises with hands both weak and strong:

- (a) When weak, the bidder must decide whether the downfall of the No Trump is assured if it be left to its fate and if so whether a suit call which would increase the size of the contract would nevertheless reduce the loss.
- (b) When strong, the point to be determined is whether the game is more probable with or without a trump.

### THE RESCUE

The advisability of the weakness take-out or "Rescue," as it is generally called, has been questioned by those who contend that advancing a contract from one to two with approximately a "bust" holding is merely increasing the commitment without material benefit. The experience of the best players in actual play and the test of many hands dealt with the idea of

throwing some accurate light upon the question seems to prove, however, that in the long run the Rescue reduces the loss.

It is *never made with a suit of less than five cards*. A trump suit of this length in about two hands out of three will take two trump tricks and the take-out will, therefore, reduce the loss one trick, unless an adversary should get in a profitable ruff.

When, however, the No Trump maker is very short and one adversary is long in the suit named by the "bust" holder, the Rescue may produce serious results. There are also the instances, referred to above, in which changing from a No Trump to a trump gives the adversaries the opportunity to ruff one or more of the high cards which justified the No Trump bid and which, had the Rescue not taken place, would have been winners.

On the other side of the account are the hands in which the No Trump maker has length and strength in the take-out suit and those in which the naming of a

## 108 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

trump keeps a long adverse suit from being run. In both of these types the Rescue is exceptionally advantageous. Then too the take-out helps in another way. Whenever it can positively be recognized as a Rescue, and is surely not an indication of strength, it warns the No Trump bidder not to go to two (if the Fourth Hand overcall the take-out) unless he have eight tricks in his own hand.

It may, therefore, be safely affirmed that the Rescue (whenever it can positively be recognized by the partner as such) is, in the long run, a sound, economic expedient and, as it is intended merely as a saving device, it is equally valuable whether the take-out suit be a Major or a Minor. Of course, when the suit is longer than five cards the benefit is proportionately greater.

All this refers to a Rescue that is solely defensive, and the question that immediately arises is: How strong can a hand be and still be considered worthless as an aid to a partner's No Trump? The

answer is: Any holding in which the long suit is not headed by Ace, King-Queen or King-Knave and which outside of the long suit is without positive help for a No Trump.\*

\*It is quite true that some of the best teachers in the country instruct their pupils to rescue a partner's No Trump with hands materially better than the above limit, such for example as:

Spades	X, X,
Hearts	X, X,
Diamonds	King, Knave, Ten, X, X,
Clubs	Queen, Knave, X, X,

and not to do so with extreme weakness, such as:

Spades	X, X,
Hearts	X, X,
Diamonds	Knave, Ten, X, X, X,
Clubs	Knave, X, X, X.

They generally fix the two limits about as follows:

**Maximum Strength:** A five-card suit without the Ace and with not more than one other trick, or a five-card suit with Ace but without other face card in that suit and with not more than one other trick.

**Minimum Strength:** A five-card suit if without side strength must be headed by King or Ace, if headed by Queen or Knave must be accompanied by a side trick.

It must be conceded that this is not using the Rescue solely as a defence, but rather as a bid to be made only when there is a good chance that it will be fulfilled.

With the first-named portion of this doctrine the player who properly appreciates the value of winning a rubber will have little sympathy. With any hand which is apt to help the partner's No Trump, even if it only be to protect a weak spot, it is auction suicide to take-out with a minor bid of two. In the example cited above, as indeed with any other hand approaching the maximum strength limit fixed by the advocates of this hybrid take-out, the chances favor a game at No Trump whenever the initial bid has been made with real strength in the other suits. Against which this system can only offer an occasional 50



## 110 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Of course, all weakness take-outs are made after the partner has bid *and Second Hand passed*. If the Second Hand

saved, or at times 14 or 21 instead of 10 entered in the trick score.

The odds against this portion of the system are so great and so apparent that to discuss it seems to unduly dignify it and yet some of its advocates have, and deserve, such auction reputations that any proposition they favor is entitled to serious consideration.

Any five-card suit headed by Ace, King-Queen or King-Knave must materially aid a No Trump, and any hand with even the weakest of five-card suits and a trick on the side has its value. Therefore, if a hand contain either of these elements of strength it may furnish exactly the assistance the No Trump needs and the Rescue may cost a game. A few small savings or gains do not adequately compensate a player for deliberately casting aside a chance to accomplish the main object for which he is striving.

The other part of this doctrine, viz: not to take-out with extreme weakness, is heartily endorsed by many practical players. It has been stated that one-third or possibly a little more than one-third of all Rescues result unfortunately. It is obvious that the weaker the hand with which the Rescue is attempted the more apt it is to go wrong. When the Rescue is limited to five-card suits headed by King (without Queen or Knave), Queen or Knave-Ten and to *all weak suits of more than five cards*, the percentage of instances in which it works well increases very distinctly. Those who believe in carrying the Rescue to the most extreme lengths, however, contend that, as it is medicine intended for weakness, the greater the affliction the more important it is that the remedy be applied; and, further, that the knowledge that his partner will take-out with utter weakness is a great help to a strong No Trump bidder; as it enables him to bid two No Trumps over the Fourth Hand when he might not do so if his partner's "pass" could have been made with a trickless hand.

The answer to the first part of this argument is that medicine which will help a moderately sick patient may not be the kind which should be used in an extreme case, and to the second that as weakness take-outs with major

bid, that takes out the No Trump; a Rescue is unnecessary and any subsequent bid by the partner shows strength.

## TAKING OUT A PARTNER'S NO TRUMP WITH STRENGTH

We now come to the more attractive take-out of a partner's No Trump, viz: the overcall with strength made with the idea that the game is more apt to be won with the suit than with the No Trump.

This is generally limited to Major suit bids, as it takes two more tricks to score game in a Minor than it does in a No Trump and there are comparatively few combinations of cards which will produce eleven tricks with a Minor suit the trump and yet fail to win nine with a No Trump.

---

suits are now generally disapproved, the universal application of the doctrine is impossible.

The consensus of expert opinion seems to be that *there may be hands too weak for a Rescue*, and while the caliber of partner and opponent, state of the rubber, etc., may affect, that the limit for a five-card suit should be Knave-Ten (or possibly Knave without Ten). A Rescue with a six or seven-card suit is generally approved even when the top card is lower than the Ten.

## 112 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

With a strong five-card Major suit a very different proposition presents itself. The reason for this is obvious. Game with a Major requires but ten tricks and many hands will take that number but fall one short of the eleven needed to reach the goal with a Minor.

Some hands with the assistance of a Dummy containing a strong Major suit will produce three odd tricks for a No Trump but will fail to furnish four for the Major suit; and others which encounter a strong, long adverse suit will find the game easy with a Major trump, impossible if played without a trump.

When the partner of a No Trump bidder has a strong five-card Major with, or without, other assistance for a No Trump, it is a gamble whether he is ensuring or losing game by changing the declaration, provided the original No Trump bidder, when he is weak in the suit named, feels that he does not dare to bid two No Trumps because he cannot distinguish the strength take-out from the Rescue.

## AUCTION DECLARATIONS 113

Numerous instances of this have occurred in the experience of every player. One example will suffice. A Third Hand has—

Spades	King, Knave, X, X, X,
Hearts	Queen, Knave, X,
Diamonds	Ace, X, X, X,
Clubs	X.

It depends entirely what kind of No Trump the partner has, which declaration is the more advantageous.

The partner's hand may be any one of the following types and, as will be seen from the estimated results, the winning of or failure to win the game probably hinges upon whether the play be with or without a trump:

HAND OF NO TRUMP DECLARER		TRICKS PROBABLE AT	
		<i>Spades</i>	<i>No Trump</i>
Spades	Ace, Queen, Ten..	11 to 13 (game)	7 or 8 (no game)
Hearts	Ace, King, X.....		
Diamonds	King, Knave, X, X, X.....		
Clubs	X, X.....		

# 114 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

HAND OF NO TRUMP DECLARER		TRICKS PROBABLE AT	
		<i>Spades</i>	<i>No Trump</i>
Spades	X.....	7 to 9 (no game)	9 to 11 (game)
Hearts	Ace, Ten, X, X..		
Diamonds	King, Queen, X, X, X.....		
Clubs	King, Queen, Knave.....		
Spades	X.....	7 to 9 (no game)	11 (game)
Hearts	Ace, King, X, X..		
Diamonds	King, Queen, Knave, X, X, X		
Clubs	Ace, X.....		
Spades	X, X.....	7 or 8 (no game)	8 to 10 (probable game)
Hearts	King, Ten, X, X		
Diamonds	Queen, Knave, X		
Clubs	Ace, Knave, Ten, X.....		
Spades	Queen, Ten, X, X	11 or 12 (game)	8 or 9 (game doubtful)
Hearts	Ace, X, X.....		
Diamonds	King, Queen, Knave, X, X...		
Clubs	Ace.....		

If, therefore, the Third Hand must decide between the two, it is very frequently merely a guess, and yet *slams*,

*games and rubbers depend upon getting that guess right.*

The game is the paramount object of the Auction player. In comparison with it, slight differences in trick or honor scores are not to be considered. The exact value of a game fixed with mathematical accuracy\* is 125 when it is the first or second of the rubber and 250 when it is the third.

## WHEN TO TAKE OUT WITH A MAJOR SUIT

The best method for ensuring the game, when the initial bid is No Trump and the partner has a hand which can materially help the No Trump and which includes a strong five-card Major suit, is to have the partner show that Major suit by bidding two Spades or Hearts, as the case may be, with the expectation that the original Declarer will overbid with two No Trumps if the character of his hand, plus the information conveyed by his partner's bid,

---

\* See pages 179-181.

## 116 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

convince him that the game is more probable with the original declaration. But if the partner is in the habit of bidding two of a Major whether he have strength or weakness, his bid does not convey any definite information and a return to the No Trump cannot be made by the original Declarer, because, should the partner have nothing but a flock of small Spades or Hearts the hand is worth more with a trump and two No Trumps is destined to severe defeat.

It, therefore, is evident that to realize the full value of the strength take-out it must in some way be earmarked so that the partner may be able to distinguish it from a Rescue. In the days when the Spade suit had a dual value this was comparatively easy, but with Spades at two legislated out of existence the task is more difficult. It is still, however, quite possible. One way to accomplish it is to bid three with strength and two with weakness, but this involves a call of three No Trumps when the initial Declarer is weak

in his partner's suit, and in these days of light initial No Trumppers, forcing so high a call is apt to be quite expensive, as it means a loss of from 66 to 120 every time a hand occurs with which eight tricks can be won but nine cannot.\* As this frequently happens it is rather a steep price to pay for the information, especially when it can be obtained in a much more simple and less expensive manner.

The elimination of the Rescue with Major suits seems to be the solution of the problem. True, this will at times cost a few extra fifties as penalties and it may show some slight loss in the honor column, but it is safe to say that all losses due to failure to use the Major suit Rescue are inconsiderable compared with the gains bound to result if the original Declarer, whenever weak in the Major take-out, is able to return to his No Trump, knowing that there is just the help his declaration needs across the table. In other words, this plan does away with guessing and

---

\* With freak Minor hands of the type given on pages 121-123 a call of three is justified by the strength of the hand.



## 118 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

enables sound bidders to play the most productive declaration practically every time.

Players who have adopted this method and who are enthusiastic over its results may still silently moan when they hold nothing but some such Major suit as Queen, Knave, X, X, X, and cannot rescue the partner; but even then they fully appreciate that the two take-outs (strength and weakness) cannot be combined effectively and they cheerfully accept the small loss (if loss in that particular hand it prove to be), knowing that the soundness of their scheme of declaration must in the end produce satisfactory results.\*

Players who adopt this system of bidding must be on the lookout for one type of hand that is apt to be confusing. It is the hand with five Spades or Hearts headed by the single honor Ace, King or Queen, and with some side assistance for a No Trump.

---

\* When a No Trump is bid by a player after his partner has passed and that partner overcalls the No Trump, the situation is very different. The overcalling partner having by his pass denied the possession of a strong suit, his overcall is at once marked as a Rescue.

This type of hand might be said to come within the definition of a Major suit strength take-out, as it mildly helps a No Trump and contains five cards of a Major suit, but the question is whether it is strong enough to avoid trouble if bid; that is—

- (a) If the No Trump maker should leave in the suit bid, would he not be overestimating the trick-taking ability of that suit?
- (b) If he should go to two No Trumps, would he not be expecting more assistance for his declaration than he will receive?

In other words, as the Major take-out is limited to strength, it should be made only with real strength, not merely with an average hand which happens to contain five cards of a Major suit. The danger is that the combined strength may not be sufficient to make two either in No Trumps or a Major suit. Possibly the best rule is not to bid unless the Major suit contain

## 120 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

two of the four top honors and the hand seem sure to furnish a minimum of four tricks for either declaration.

With six cards of a Major suit many players still stick to the weakness take-out, being prepared, should the partner call two No Trumps, to bid three in their suit. There is undoubted wisdom in this, as with a six-card suit and a partner who has the other three well in hand there can be little danger. With a suit of seven, no matter how weak it may be, the soundness of bidding it cannot be questioned.

With a five-card or longer Major suit, including four or five honors, the first overcall of the partner's No Trump should be a bid of three. This clearly marks the character of the take-out.\*

### THE MINOR RESCUE

The abandonment of the Rescue with a Major suit does not, however, in any way affect the wisdom of using it with

---

\* Four Aces is a sound, and almost the only, justification for the original Declarer to bid three No Trumps after his partner has taken out one No Trump with three of a Major suit.

a Minor as, in that case, it is clearly marked as weakness. *The sound bidder never calls two of a Minor with strength.* The only Minor take-out with strength is a bid of three made with the unusual hand, which apparently ensures game and possibly a better honor score with the Minor suit the trump. This hand almost invariably has a blank suit; some such holding as—

Spades	X, X, X, X,
Hearts	X, X,
Diamonds	Ace, King, Queen, Ten, X, X, X,
Clubs	None.

Any such combination warrants a Minor strength take-out, as the No Trump may have been bid with strong Spades and Hearts and without defence in Clubs. With such an unusual hand it is perfectly safe to differentiate the bid from a Rescue by calling *three* Diamonds. If the partner have the other three suits well protected he can safely bid three No Trumps.

## 122 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

One or two more examples of this kind of a Minor take-out may prove of interest. A Dealer bids one No Trump, holding—

Spades	Ace, King, X,
Hearts	Ace, King, X,
Diamonds	Ace, X, X, X,
Clubs	X, X, X,

and the Third Hand has—

Spades	Queen, X, X,
Hearts	Queen, X, X,
Diamonds	King, Queen, Knave, Ten, X, X, X,
Clubs	None.

The Diamonds would produce a Grand Slam plus 63 honors. The No Trump would net at most 20 for tricks plus 30 Aces.

Another case:

The Dealer bids a Class B No Trump, holding—

Spades	Ace, X, X,
Hearts	None,
Diamonds	X, X, X, X,
Clubs	Ace, King, Queen, X, X, X.

The Second Hand with short-weak Spades and the five top Hearts passes.

The Third Hand has—

Spades	X,
Hearts	X, X, X, X,
Diamonds	Ace, King, Queen, X, X, X,
Clubs	X, X.

The difference between taking out and leaving in the No Trump is self-evident.

These freak hands are exceptional, but when they do appear, bidding the Minor suit is most profitable.

## SUMMARY OF TAKE-OUTS

A take-out by bidding two of a Minor suit means weakness.

A take-out by bidding two of a Major suit means strength.\*

---

\* An example of each case follows:

Suit 1	Knave, Ten, X, X, X,
Suit 2	X, X, X,
Suit 3	Knave, X, X,
Suit 4	X, X.

If Suit 1 be a Minor, bid it; if it be a Major, **pass**.

Suit 1	Ace, King, Knave, X, X,
Suit 2	X, X,
Suit 3	King, X, X,
Suit 4	Queen, Ten, X.

If Suit 1 be a Minor, do not bid it (two No Trumps would be a sound declaration); if it be a Major, declare it.

## 124 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

A take-out by bidding three of a Minor suit means unusual length and strength which the bidder thinks will produce game.

A take-out by bidding three of a Major suit shows length in the suit and four or five honors.

### A SCORE COMPLETELY ALTERS THE SITUATION

Of course, all of the above applies only at a love score. When a Minor suit does not require eleven tricks to win the game and a Major suit can reach its goal with less than ten the situation is very different.

Whenever the Declarer has any score, no matter how small, the Minor suits are at least as near game as the Majors are at love. Diamonds, therefore, with 6, 7 or 8, should be treated as a Major suit is at love; Clubs should receive the same treatment when the score is 6, 7, 8, 9 or 10.

With a score which ensures a game if

nine tricks (three odd) be won with a suit the trump, it is, as a general rule, wiser to bid that suit than to decline to overcall the No Trump, and the same rule is even more emphatically sound when eight tricks (two odd) are all that are needed for the game with either a suit or No Trump. This is the case in the following situations:

12-19 inclusive, with Spades the trump under consideration.

14-19 inclusive, with Hearts the trump under consideration.

16-19 inclusive, with Diamonds the trump under consideration.

18-19 inclusive, with Clubs the trump under consideration.

When one trick with either a suit or No Trump will win the game it is generally foolish to advance the amount of the contract unless a probable increase in the honor score or a desire to preempt justifies such action.



## 126 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

### WHEN TO OVERBID ONE NO TRUMP WITH TWO NO TRUMPS

In the cases that have been considered above, the question has been when a partner's No Trump should be overcalled with two of a suit. It frequently happens, however, that an overcall of a different character, viz: two No Trumps, is most advisable. When a Dealer has bid a No Trump and the Second Hand has passed, the Third Hand knows that should he pass, the Fourth Hand, who is probably the stronger adversary, can indicate to his partner the lead he desires by bidding two of a suit. Should either the Dealer or the Third Hand subsequently bid two No Trumps this suit call will doubtless prove of considerable value as it will enable the leader to open with a strengthening card of his partner's suit instead of starting his own and thereby leading a suit which he probably can never establish. If, however, instead of passing the one No Trump the Third Hand should bid two No Trumps he is very apt to shut out the

Fourth Hand, as a call of three generally appears to a player with a No Trumper on each side of him as too dangerous a declaration to venture.

It is, therefore, sound bidding for the Third Hand on the first round to advance a partner's No Trump from one to two in every instance (except of course when he has a Major suit bid) in which he has four tricks for a No Trump. This declaration very frequently shuts out the information which would produce the only lead which could prevent the No Trump from going game. It results badly when the Second Hand has refrained from bidding (having a solid suit), but he is not apt to have such a holding with two No Trump hands in existence and the bid more than makes up for an occasional loss by the numerous cases in which it works like a charm.

### OVERCALLING A PARTNER'S MINOR SUIT DECLARATION

When the Dealer has called one Club or one Diamond and the Second Hand has

passed, the Third Hand must realize that scoring game with this declaration is most unlikely.\* He should, therefore, overbid it whenever his strength is sufficient to justify such action. When he has a strong Major suit he should, of course, declare it, but when a Major suit bid is lacking he should declare a No Trump whenever he has strength in two suits† or any defence in three. In the exceptional case in which a game seems probable, should the Minor suit declared by his partner be the trump, he should advance his partner's call to at least three.

A few examples may illustrate the above.

---

\* With a score in the trick column the Third Hand should treat his partner's bid of one of a Minor suit just as, without a score, he treats a bid of one of a Major suit.

† This applies even when an Ace or King of the Minor suit bid by the partner constitutes the "strength" of one of the two suits, because in that case the partner not having both Ace and King of his Minor must have side strength.

## THIRD HAND HOLDINGS, PARTNER HAVING CALLED ONE DIAMOND AND SECOND HAND HAV- ING PASSED

Spades	Ace, X, X.....	} Should bid No Trump.
Hearts	X, X, X.....	
Diamonds	Queen, X, X.....	
Clubs	Knave, Ten, X, X..	
Spades	Ace, X.....	} Should bid No Trump.
Hearts	X, X, X, X.....	
Diamonds	Ace, X, X.....	
Clubs	Knave, X, X, X....	
Spades	King, X, X.....	} Should bid No Trump.
Hearts	X, X, X.....	
Diamonds	X, X.....	
Clubs	Ace, King, Queen, X, X.....	
Spades	Queen, Knave, X...	} Should bid No Trump.
Hearts	X, X, X.....	
Diamonds	Ace, X, X.....	
Clubs	Knave, Ten, X, X..	
Spades	Ace, X.....	} Should bid No Trump.
Hearts	Queen, X, X.....	
Diamonds	X, X, X, X.....	
Hearts	King, X, X, X.....	
Spades	King, X, X.....	} Should bid No Trump.
Hearts	Ace, X, X.....	
Diamonds	Ace, Knave, X, X..	
Clubs	X, X, X.....	

## 130 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Spades	Ace, King, X.....	} Should bid four Diamonds.
Hearts	None.....	
Diamonds	King, X, X, X, X..	
Clubs	Queen, X, X, X, X	

Spades	Ace, King, Knave, X, X.....	} Should bid one Spade.
Hearts	X, X.....	
Diamonds	Knave, X.....	
Clubs	King, Knave, X, X	

Spades	Knave, X, X, X, X	} Should pass.
Hearts	X, X, X.....	
Diamonds	Knave, X.....	
Clubs	King, X, X.....	

Spades	X, X, X.....	} Should pass.
Hearts	X, X, X.....	
Diamonds	X, X.....	
Clubs	Ace, Knave, X, X, X.....	

Spades	X, X, X... ..	} Should bid two Clubs.
Hearts	X, X, X.....	
Diamonds	X, X.....	
Clubs	Ace, King, Knave, X, X.....	

Spades	X, X, X.....	} Should bid No Trump.
Hearts	X, X.....	
Diamonds	Ace, X, X.....	
Clubs	Ace, King, Queen, X, X.....	

When the initial bid is two Diamonds or two Clubs,\* the Third Hand should allow it to stand unless he have a Major suit holding which he believes will win the game with the assistance of his partner's solid Minor suit, or unless he be justified in bidding two No Trumps. He can do the latter with comparatively little strength, as he knows his partner has an established suit.

#### WHEN ONE OF A MAJOR SUIT HAS BEEN DECLARED

When the Dealer has bid one Heart or one Spade, and the Second Hand has passed, the Third Hand should not overcall unless weak in the suit his partner has named. By "weak" is meant not only without high cards but also without length. With four small Hearts or Spades, and that suit bid by the Dealer, the declaration should not be changed.

If, however, the Third Hand with other strength be *both short and weak* in the

---

\* See page 61.

## 132 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Major suit declared by his partner, a pass is inexcusable. In the old days many players considered it almost an insult to overcall a partner's Major suit bid and the text books were fond of emphasizing that "Minor suits are bid to be taken out, Major suits to be played." Now it is realized that a Major bid of one helps a No Trump just as much as a Minor bid of one and therefore that it is just as pressing an invitation for a No Trump. The only difference is the No Trump should be called over the Minor when the Third Hand can help the Minor bid, but under such conditions it should not be called over the Major. The initial Declarer may have been in doubt between a Major suit and a No Trump and chosen the former for informatory purposes. The No Trump is the shorter road to the goal and the partner of the first bidder should not hesitate about taking it when it seems to be more promising. The bid can be made without danger because the initial Declarer when he does not need help in the trump suit (for example, if he have five

or six with four honors) can readily return to his original declaration.

The Third Hand should bid one Spade over one Heart or two Hearts over one Spade with strength sufficient to justify an original call in the suit that is being bid and distinct weakness in the partner's declaration. The theory is that the Third Hand knows that he cannot aid his partner's suit, while it is possible that his partner may help him. The only distinction between bidding two Hearts over one Spade and one Spade over one Heart is that in the one case the amount of the declaration is advanced from one to two and in the other it is not altered. This difference, for the purpose under consideration, is theoretical rather than real. When the bidder, with a reasonable chance of success, is striving for the game which with the suit declared requires four odd tricks, it makes comparatively little difference whether his declaration be one or two.

When the Third Hand has such strength in Hearts or Spades that he would advance



## 134 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

his partner's declaration of either in the event of an adverse bid, it is wise for him to bid two or more on the first round.

The Third Hand should call two of a Minor suit over one of a Major when (without other assistance for a No Trump) he holds a long and practically solid suit. The original bidder can then use his judgment whether to allow the Minor to stand, to return to his own suit or to bid No Trumps. With a score, two of a Minor suit may be bid more freely over the partner's one of a Major.

A rescue of a Major bid of one should never be attempted. Taking it out shows strength. A few examples follow, showing the proper method of bidding over partner's one of a Major suit:

### THIRD HAND HOLDINGS, DEALER HAVING BID ONE HEART AND SECOND HAND HAVING PASSED

Spades	Ace, King, X, X, X.....	} Should bid one Spade. This hand cannot help the Heart, but the Dealer may assist the Spade.
	X.....	
Hearts	X.....	
Diamonds	X, X, X, X.....	
Clubs	X, X, X.....	

# **AUCTION DECLARATIONS** 135

Spades	Ace, King, Knave,	} This hand can help the Heart; that aid would be denied by the bid of a Spade. Two Hearts should be declared.
	X, X.....	
Hearts	King, Ten, X....	
Diamonds	Queen, Knave, X,	
	X.....	
Clubs	X.....	

Spades	Ace, King, Queen,	} Same reasoning as previous hand, but this hand is so strong that preempting is not important; either four Hearts or a pass would be sound.
	X, X.....	
Hearts	Knave, Ten, X, X	
Diamonds	Ace, X, X, X....	
Clubs	None.....	

Spades	None.....	} Should bid four Hearts.
Hearts	King, Knave, X,	
	X.....	
Diamonds	X, X, X, X.....	
Clubs	Ace, King, Queen,	
	X, X.....	

Spades	Knave, Ten, X,	} This hand combined with the Dealer's would probably win more tricks with Spades the trump than it would at Hearts, but to bid a Spade would show strength and deceive the partner. A Rescue, in addition to being deceptive, is unnecessary, as the Fourth Hand will probably overcall the Heart.
	X, X.....	
Hearts	X.....	
Diamonds	X, X, X.....	
Clubs	X, X, X, X.....	

## 136 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Spades	X, X, X.....	} Should pass, same reasoning as previous hand.
Hearts	X.....	
Diamonds	X, X, X.....	
Clubs	Knave, Ten, X, X, X, X.....	

Spades	Ace, Ten, X, X, X	} Should bid one No Trump.
Hearts	Knave, X.....	
Diamonds	King, Knave, X..	
Clubs	Queen, Knave, X	

Spades	Ace, X.....	} Should bid one No Trump.
Hearts	X, X.....	
Diamonds	X, X, X, X.....	
Clubs	Ace, King, Queen, X, X.....	

Spades	X, X, X, X.....	} Should bid one No Trump.
Hearts	X, X.....	
Diamonds	King, Knave, X..	
Clubs	Ace, X, X, X.....	

Spades	Knave, Ten, X, X	} Should bid one No Trump.*
Hearts	X.....	
Diamonds	Ten, X, X, X....	
Clubs	Ace, Knave, X, X	

Spades	Queen, X.....	} Should bid two Hearts.*
Hearts	Queen, X, X, X..	
Diamonds	Ace, X, X, X....	
Clubs	Knave, X, X....	

\*See footnote on page 137.

Spades	X, X, X.....	} Should bid two Clubs.*
Hearts	X, X.....	
Diamonds	X, X, X.....	
Clubs	Ace, King, Queen, X, X.....	

## WHEN MORE THAN ONE OF A MAJOR SUIT HAS BEEN DECLARED

The declaration of two or more of a Major suit by the initial Declarer is practically a command to the partner not to overcall.† The Third Hand should only change such a declaration when convinced beyond reasonable doubt that his holding is so unusual that he is warranted in assuming the responsibility of disregarding the order which has been

---

\* These three hands might all be held by the partner of the hand given on page 38. It will be noted that the three are different types, but in each case by starting with a Heart the winning declaration is ultimately reached; of course, in the third case the Heart bidder holding the hand given on page 38, would call two No Trumps over two clubs. Therefore, while in two of the three cases the No Trump is the winning declaration, in both it can be reached via the Heart route; but in the remaining case in which the Heart is the only game-producing bid it will never be declared if the Dealer start with a No Trump. At first glance the hand on page 38 appears to be a much sounder No Trump than a Heart; as a test, however, it was dealt a large number of times and the Heart was found in the long run to produce better results; provided, of course, the partner bid scientifically.

† See pages 63-77.

## 138 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

issued. Weakness in the partner's suit and strength in the other Major suit is far from being a sufficient justification, as the chances are that the initial Declarer is preempting to shut out that suit.

To overbid two of a Major suit with the other Major suit is tantamount to saying, "Partner, I know you are trying to shut out this declaration but I am strong enough to insist upon it." Such action is only justified by a high honor score or a sure game.

Unless holding four or five honors and such other strength that the game is assured, it is obviously absurd to overbid two Hearts or Spades with three of a Minor suit.

Four Aces is practically the only holding which justifies overbidding two of a Major suit with two No Trumps.

Hands frequently occur with which it is advisable to advance an initial Major suit bid from two to three or from three to four. The initial bid shows a desire to preempt and if the partner have the

strength to safely help the cause along it is good policy for him to do so. A number of such examples appear in the illustrations which follow:

## THIRD HAND HOLDINGS, DEALER HAVING BID TWO HEARTS AND SECOND HAND HAVING PASSED

Spades	Ace, Queen, X, X, X, X.....	} Should pass.
Hearts	X, X.....	
Diamonds	Ace, King, X.....	
Clubs	X, X.....	
Spades	Ace, King, Queen, Ten, X, X.....	} Should bid two Spades.
Hearts	X, X.....	
Diamonds	X, X.....	
Clubs	X, X, X.....	
Spades	X, X.....	} Should pass.
Hearts	X, X, X.....	
Diamonds	X, X.....	
Clubs	Ace, King, Queen, Ten, X, X.....	
Spades	None.....	} Should bid three Clubs, game seems more probable than at Hearts.
Hearts	X, X.....	
Diamonds	King, X, X, X, X...	
Clubs	Ace, King, Queen, Ten, X, X.....	

## 140 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Spades	X, X, X, X.....	} Should bid three Hearts.
Hearts	Ace, King, X.....	
Diamonds	King, X, X, X.....	
Clubs	X, X.....	

Spades	Ace, X, X.....	} Should bid three Hearts.
Hearts	Ace, X, X.....	
Diamonds	King, X, X.....	
Clubs	Queen, Knave, X, X	

Spades	X, X, X.....	} Should bid four Hearts.
Hearts	Ace, King, X.....	
Diamonds	Ace, King, Queen, X, X, X.....	
Clubs	X.....	

## VIII

### FOURTH HAND DECLARATIONS

Widely different from any other situation at the Auction table is the one which the Fourth Hand faces when the other three players have passed. As a general rule, when this happens the Fourth Hand holds a combination of cards which makes his bid unmistakable. The other three players having shown weakness, or at least the absence of offensive strength, the Fourth Hand almost invariably has an obvious No Trump or Major suit declaration. When, however, the exceptional case occurs in which the Fourth Hand after three passes finds himself without a plainly indicated bid, the question for him to consider is whether it is more probable that he and his partner, or the opponents, will profit by having the deal played. When he has an average hand and his partner has passed with considerable strength, he may by passing lose an opportunity to



## 142 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

secure game, or at least a material score. On the other hand, when the Dealer has passed with strength, the Fourth Hand by declaring may present a game to the adversaries.

This is a position in which conventional rules cannot guide. The individual characteristics of the players must be considered and the Fourth Hand must determine whether the Dealer or the Second Hand (it is not probable that the Third Hand has taken a chance of this kind) is the more apt to have been cautious, careless or "foxy." Whether the Fourth Hand should pass or declare depends upon where he places the responsibility for his predicament.

Of course, it may happen that with average strength in the Fourth Hand there is similar strength in each of the other hands, and that no player has a *bona fide* declaration. Should the Fourth Hand diagnose this to be the situation, it is wiser for him to pass. Struggling for a doubtful odd trick is not a winning gamble

unless, of course, that trick will win the game. From a love score when it is only a question whether one odd can be scored, the player who attempts to make it is really playing against odds of at least five to one. (The most the trick will produce is 10 and there is a penalty of 50 should he fail to score it.)

## IX

### THE BIDDING SUBSEQUENT TO THE FIRST ROUND

After the completion of the first round of the bidding, the question of what any particular player should do upon any particular occasion becomes far more complicated. So many bids and passes have occurred (some of which may induce further bidding and others of which may strongly warn against it) that it is difficult to frame set rules which will accurately cover every case that may arise.

There are, however, a few general principles which it is important for the Declarer to bear in mind in the midst of the intricacies of the later bidding. The most important of these are covered in this chapter.

**DO NOT ADVANCE YOUR PARTNER'S  
BID UNLESS YOU HAVE GREATER  
STRENGTH THAN HE  
EXPECTED**

It is most difficult for the beginner in Auction to determine when he should support his partner's declaration and when he should decline to advance it and possibly permit a low bid made by an adversary to become the final declaration. . The player who is too timid loses many opportunities both to play declarations that can be made and to force the adversaries to contracts they cannot fulfil. The player who is too bold is continually overestimating the strength of his cards and creating disaster for his partnership.

The following data upon the subject may prove of value when a doubtful situation arises.

A player who has bid one and declined to advance his own declaration from one to two has probably made his original bid with little more than the minimum amount of strength that justified his declaration.

## 146 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

His bid has been based upon the expectation of receiving average assistance from a partner who had not at that time had an opportunity of showing either weakness or strength. Therefore, unless that partner have more than average assistance he should not advance the declaration.

Considering first the No Trump, we find the strength of a minimum No Trump Declarer may be estimated as follows:

	TRICKS
Value of high cards in border-line No Trumps....	3
Value of playing combined hands.....	1
Value of medium cards which can probably be made from one hand or the other.....	1
Value of high cards expected from partner.....	2
	<hr/>
Total, which equals amount of bid.....	7

When, therefore, the partner of a No Trump bidder is called upon to decide whether to advance that declaration, an adverse suit having been bid, he should not do so unless satisfied that his hand is better than his partner expected it to be. As he does not know whether or not the initial Declarer can stop the adverse suit, he should not advance to two No

Trumps unless he himself can stop it, except in the unusual case in which his hand is so strong that he is satisfied his partner could not have declared one No Trump without strength in the adverse suit. That, however, is the unusual holding. As a general rule he should not bid two No Trumps unless he have at least one trick in the adverse suit, one other sure, quick trick and a reasonable chance for more.

For example, suppose the bidding to have been one No Trump, two Clubs, and the partner of the initial No Trump Declarer holds—

Spades	X, X,
Hearts	X, X, X,
Diamonds	Ace, Queen, Ten, X, X,
Clubs	Ace, X, X.

The two Aces are quick, sure tricks, one in the adverse suit, and the remainder of the Diamond holding contains sufficient possibilities to warrant the call of two No Trumps. Change the hand slightly by substituting small Diamonds in place of

## 148 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Queen, Ten, and the probability of establishing that suit is so materially decreased that the extra strength necessary to make the call is lacking and it is safer to pass. Of course, should the hand be—

Spades	Ace, X, X,
Hearts	X, X,
Diamonds	Ace, Queen, Ten, X, X,
Clubs	X, X, X,

the bid over two Clubs would be two Diamonds.

A few more examples follow:

### HANDS HELD BY THE PARTNER OF A NO TRUMP DECLARER, AN ADVER- SARY HAVING CALLED TWO CLUBS

Spades	Ace, X, X, X....	{ To bid is tempting and the case is very close but, if the partner be a light No Trump bidder, it is safer to pass. The unguarded Queen of Hearts is not quite sufficient strength, in addition to the two tricks, to justify a bid.
Hearts	Queen.....	
Diamonds	X, X, X, X, X...	
Clubs	King, X, X.....	

# AUCTION DECLARATIONS 149

Spades	Ace, X, X.....	} Should bid two No Trumps. The Dia- mond strength is suffi- cient to justify it.
Hearts	X, X.....	
Diamonds	Queen, Knave, Ten, X, X.....	
Clubs	King, X, X.....	

Spades	Ace, X, X.....	} Should bid two Diamonds.
Hearts	Queen, X, X.....	
Diamonds	King, Queen, X, X, X.....	
Clubs	X, X.....	

Spades	Ace, X, X.....	} Should pass.
Hearts	King, Queen, X..	
Diamonds	X, X, X, X.....	
Clubs	X, X, X.....	

Spades	X, X, X.....	} Should pass. It would be a fatal mistake to double or to bid two No Trumps. The Club bidder is obviously making a shift declara- tion. That is, with some long and solid suit he is calling Clubs with the hope that two No Trumps will be bid and that he can then bring off a successful double. If the Clubs be doubled he will shift to his real suit. When the shift bid is recognized it should be left undisturbed and slaughtered.
Hearts	X, X, X, X.....	
Diamonds	X.....	
Clubs	Ace, King, Knave, Ten, X.....	



## 150 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Spades	King, X, X.....	} Should pass.
Hearts	X, X, X.....	
Diamonds	Queen, X, X.....	
Clubs	Queen, X, X, X..	

Spades	Queen, X, X.....	} Should bid two No Trumps.
Hearts	X.....	
Diamonds	Ace, King, X, X, X.....	
Clubs	Knave, Ten, X, X	

### WHEN TO ADVANCE A PARTNER'S SUIT BID

When determining whether or not to advance a partner's suit bid the player must remember that the minimum strength with which this bid is made, is Ace, King and three small in the trump suit. The two top honors are, of course, each worth a trick and the three small cards, if there be an even break, should produce two more; so the original suit bid is set down as having a minimum value of four tricks. Add to this the trick always supposed to accrue to the player of the combined hands and it becomes evident that to fulfil a declaration of two in the suit, the player who is advanc-

ing the bid must take three tricks with his own hand.

To answer the question of what should be "raisers" (or to use plain English, probable tricks) for a suit declaration is far more difficult than the same question concerning a No Trump. In addition to high cards, length in the trump suit and the ability to ruff are material factors.

The following table probably covers the question as accurately as possible:

Ace, King or Queen of trump suit, each.....	one
A blank suit, provided the hand contain trumps for ruffing.....	at least two
A single card suit, provided the hand contain trumps for ruffing.....	at least one
A two card suit, provided the hand contain trumps for ruffing.....	less than one
A side Ace.....	one
A guarded side King, unless the suit has been bid by the adversary to the left.....	less than one
A side King and Queen of the same suit.....	fully one
A guarded side Queen.....	much less than one
Four small trumps without short suits to ruff.....	less than one
Five small trumps without short suits to ruff.....	one

Figuring on the basis of the above table, it is a grave question whether with just

## 152 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

two tricks the partner's bid should be raised. Some players and authorities recommend doing so, but when it is remembered that the original bid may have been made with only four tricks, that the allowance of one extra trick for playing the combined hands is liberal, and that this plus two totals only seven, one less than the amount being bid, the danger of the practice is self-evident. Conservative Declarers do not believe in advancing a partner's suit declaration of one with a bare two tricks, but with exactly that strength they will advance a partner's declaration of two to three, regardless of whether the two was declared originally or bid one at a time; as two tricks should be sufficient to aid to the extent of one, a partner who is able to bid two entirely upon the strength of his own hand.

With any greater strength than two, the partner's bid of one should be advanced and each additional trick justifies an additional advance. The following examples may aid in elucidating the above.

## HANDS WITH WHICH A PARTNER'S BID OF ONE HEART SHOULD OR SHOULD NOT BE ADVANCED, AN ADVERSARY HAVING CALLED TWO DIAMONDS

Spades	X, X, X.....	} Only worth one trick. Should not advance partner's bid under any circumstances.
Hearts	Ace, X, X.....	
Diamonds	X, X, X.....	
Clubs	Knave, X, X, X..	

Spades	Ace, X, X.....	} Worth exactly two tricks. Should not raise from one to two, but should from two to three.
Hearts	King, X, X.....	
Diamonds	X, X, X.....	
Clubs	Knave, X, X, X..	

Spades	Ace, X.....	} The Ace is worth one, plus which the hand has two elements of doubtful value, viz: there are but two Spades in it and it con- tains the Queen-Knave of Clubs. This com- bination is not, how- ever, sufficient to jus- tify a raise from one to two.
Hearts	X, X, X.....	
Diamonds	X, X, X.....	
Clubs	Queen, Knave, X, X, X.....	

# 154 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Spades	Ace.....	{ The singleton Ace is worth one plus at least one, to which should be added the doubtful value of Queen-Knave of Clubs. This hand is certainly worth one raise. It should advance a partner's bid from one to two, but not to three unless the bidding of the partner is known to be very conservative.
Hearts	X, X, X.....	
Diamonds	X, X, X, X.....	
Clubs	Queen, Knave, X, X, X.....	

Spades	Ace, X, X.....	} Should pass.
Hearts	X, X.....	
Diamonds	X, X, X.....	
Clubs	King, X, X, X, X	

Spades	Ace, X, X.....	} Under the strength requisite for a bid. Should pass.
Hearts	X, X, X, X.....	
Diamonds	Knave, X, X....	
Clubs	Knave, Ten, X...	

Spades	Ace, X.....	} More valuable than the preceding hand. Should advance from from one to two.
Hearts	X, X, X, X.....	
Diamonds	X, X.....	
Clubs	Knave, Ten, X, X, X.....	

# AUCTION DECLARATIONS 155

Spades	Ace, X.....	} Worth two raises.
Hearts	King, X, X, X...	
Diamonds	X, X.....	
Clubs	Queen, Knave, X, X, X.....	

Spades	Ace.....	} Worth three raises.
Hearts	King, X, X, X...	
Diamonds	X, X, X.....	
Clubs	King, Knave, X, X, X.....	

Spades	None.....	} On the basis of the above table this hand may be figured to be worth about six tricks, it should advance the Hearts to five but not higher unless the Dia- monds have been bid in such a way that it is safe to infer that the partner cannot have more than one.
Hearts	King, X, X, X, X	
Diamonds	X, X, X.....	
Clubs	Ace, King, X, X, X.....	

Spades	Ace, X.....	} Worth one raise if the original Diamond bid be to the right, but if it be to the left, should pass.
Hearts	X, X, X, X.....	
Diamonds	King, X.....	
Clubs	X, X, X, X, X....	

## 156 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

### DO NOT ADVANCE YOUR OWN BID FROM ONE TO TWO UNLESS YOU HAVE AT LEAST SIX TRICKS IN YOUR OWN HAND

Whether it be a No Trump\* or a suit declaration, a player should not bid two originally with less than six tricks, and the same rule applies whenever the original bidder is called upon to determine whether, without assistance from his partner, he should increase his own call of one to two. In both cases the partner may have that much dreaded "bust," and it is, therefore, unwise to contract to take eight tricks unless at least six be assured.

Players who do not follow this rule may cite the case of an original one No Trump which is often bid with only three sure tricks plus possibilities and which is, of course, a contract to take seven with a hand which may be four tricks short of that number. These players contend it is more conservative to bid eight with five

---

\* Except with four Aces, in which case the desire to place 100 in the honor score is the justification for the bid. See pages 43 and 44.

in hand than seven with three in hand. At first glance this appears plausible, but it really is not sound. A bid of one is rarely penalized by a double, but when two is called the double frequently follows.

The original declaration is a different proposition. It is of vital importance that at the beginning of bidding the partner be informed concerning the general character of the holding and in the long run any reasonable risk for that purpose is well worth the taking.

The advance from one to two is totally different. The partner has received his information and he will help if he have any margin over a bare two tricks. When the partner has but two tricks or less (most probably less) a venturesome advance of his own bid by the original Declarer is not apt to be of any benefit and it may result in a severe penalty. Furthermore, it is important that this advance, when made, should give definite information so that the partner may have data which will enable him to push it



## 158 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

further if his holding warrant. It will be noted that a player is advised to advance a declaration from two to three with less strength than from one to two; consequently it is important that this bid of two should not be made without sufficient justification. It seems wise, therefore, to make it an invariable rule that upon the second round a player with less than six tricks should not advance his own suit or No Trump bid from one to two, regardless of whether the left or right hand adversary have declared against him.

The following examples may prove of service:

### HANDS WHICH HAVE BID ONE NO TRUMP AND HAVE BEEN OVER- CALLED BY AN ADVERSE TWO HEARTS

Spades	Ace, X, X, X . . . .	} Should pass.
Hearts	Ace, Queen . . . . .	
Diamonds	Queen, X, X . . . .	
Clubs	Ace, X, X, X . . . .	

Spades	Ace, X, X.....	} This hand is worth six tricks with the Heart bid on the right, not so much with it on the left. The location of the Heart strength should determine whether it bid two No Trumps or pass.
Hearts	King, Knave, X..	
Diamonds	X, X, X, X.....	
Clubs	Ace, King, Queen	

Spades	King, X.....	} Should bid two No Trumps.
Hearts	Ace, Queen, Ten..	
Diamonds	Queen, Knave, X, X, X.....	
Clubs	Ace, Knave, X...	

Spades	X, X.....	} Should bid two No Trumps.
Hearts	Ace, Knave, X...	
Diamonds	King, Queen, Knave, X, X...	
Clubs	King, Queen, X...	

Spades	King, Queen, X...	} Should bid three Diamonds.
Hearts	Ace, X.....	
Diamonds	King, Queen, Knave, X, X, X	
Clubs	X, X.....	

Spades	King, Queen, X..	} Should bid two No Trumps, as that stands a better chance of producing game than three Diamonds.
Hearts	Ace, X, X.....	
Diamonds	Ace, King, Queen, X, X, X.....	
Clubs	X.....	

## 160 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Spades	King, Queen, X..	} Should pass.
Hearts	King, X, X.....	
Diamonds	Ace, Queen, X...	
Clubs	Queen, X, X, X..	

Spades	Ace, King, Queen, X.....	} Should bid two Spades.
Hearts	King, X.....	
Diamonds	Ace, Queen, X...	
Clubs	King, X, X, X...	

### HANDS WHICH HAVE BID ONE DIAMOND, SECOND AND THIRD HAND HAVE PASSED AND FOURTH HAND HAS CALLED ONE HEART

Spades	X, X, X.....	} Should pass on this and all future rounds.
Hearts	X, X.....	
Diamonds	Ace, Queen, Ten, X, X.....	} The first bid showed the full strength of the hand.
Clubs	King, Knave, X..	

Spades	Ace, King, X....	} Should pass.
Hearts	X, X, X.....	
Diamonds	Ace, Knave, X, X, X.....	
Clubs	X, X.....	

Spades	Ace, King, X....	} Should bid two Diamonds.
Hearts	X, X.....	
Diamonds	Ace, King, X, X, X.....	
Clubs	X, X, X.....	

Spades	Ace, X, X.....	} Should bid two Diamonds.
Hearts	X.....	
Diamonds	Ace, Queen, Knaves, X, X, X	
Clubs	X, X, X.....	
Spades	X.....	} Should bid two Clubs.
Hearts	None.....	
Diamonds	Ace, King, X, X, X, X.....	
Clubs	King, Queen, X, X, X, X.....	

## A PLAYER WHO HAS BID HIS FULL STRENGTH SHOULD THERE- AFTER BE SILENT

A player who is considering whether to advance his own or partner's bid should always be sure that he has not already shown his full strength. The temptation to disregard this rule is at times exceedingly strong. For example: the Dealer declares one Heart holding King, Queen and three other Hearts and the Ace of Spades. The partner overcalls the Heart with one No Trump and the Fourth Hand bids two Spades. In this case the original bidder is tempted to advance the No

## 162 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Trump to two because he has the adverse suit stopped, not considering that his partner in bidding the No Trump, counted upon him for at least the amount of strength evidenced by his original bid, and that his Ace of Spades is merely the equivalent for his failure to hold the Ace of Hearts. Any number of such examples may be given.

A player bids one Heart, holding—

Spades	Ace, X, X,
Hearts	Ace, Knave, X, X, X,
Diamonds	X, X,
Clubs	X, X, X,

the Second Hand bids one Spade, the partner two Hearts and the Fourth Hand two Spades. Some players would seriously consider bidding three Hearts, but such action would not be justified, as the hand is really the equivalent of a border-line Heart, and consequently any further advance should come from the partner who is counting upon it for that amount of strength. The full strength of the hand

has been shown; to bid three would be to announce tricks it does not possess. Varying the holding slightly, changes the situation. For example—

Spades	Ace, X, X,
Hearts	Ace, Knave, X, X, X,
Diamonds	None,
Clubs	Queen, Knave, X, X, X,

or

Spades	Ace, X,
Hearts	Ace, Knave, X, X, X, X,
Diamonds	X,
Clubs	X, X, X, X.

In the first hand the absence of Diamonds and the Club assistance, and in the second the extra Heart and the Diamond singleton constitute strength not originally announced and consequently warrant a bid of three; but when the partner has already been told the full story it is fatal to bid the same strength twice. This error is very common, even among good

## 164 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

players, and is made so frequently that advice regarding it cannot be stated with too great emphasis.

One more example may not be superfluous. The initial Declarer bids one No Trump, holding—

Spades	Ace, X,
Hearts	Queen, Knave, X,
Diamonds	King, Knave, X, X,
Clubs	X, X, X, X,

his left hand adversary bids two Spades, the partner two No Trumps, the right hand adversary three Spades. To bid three No Trumps would be most unsound, as the full strength was shown by the first declaration. The same cards will not win twice and should not be bid twice. When the entire strength of the hand has once been declared the partner knows much better than the original Declarer how far the combined hands may safely venture and the responsibility should be placed upon his shoulders. The player who bids his cards twice is as

dangerous a partner as the player who declares initially without having strength to warrant an initial declaration.

**FLAG-FLYING AT TIMES MAY BE WISE,  
BUT IF PRACTISED CONSTANTLY  
IS APT TO PRODUCE AUC-  
TION BANKRUPTCY**

The practice generally called Flag-Flying is the overbidding of an adverse declaration, which, if allowed to stand, would result in the game being won by the adversaries. The Flag-Flyer knows that his holding does not justify his bid; but he hopes that he may force the adversaries to a contract they cannot fulfil, or that (if they do not overcall) his loss will be less than that which he would sustain should they go game. This is fully described in the chapter on "Doubling."\*

---

\* See pages 177-187.



## X

### DOUBLING

Doubles may be divided into two classes: Informatory and Business.

Informatory. Those which are made for the purpose of conveying information to the partner and which he is expected to overbid.

Business. Those which are made for the purpose of increasing the score of the doubler.

### INFORMATORY DOUBLES

Informatory doubles of a bid of one have been fully described in the chapter on "Second Hand Play"\* and it is, therefore, unnecessary to repeat what was said there.†

---

\* See pages 91-94 and 96-98.

† At one time it was proposed that the double of an initial bid of two should be made an *informatory* not a *business* double and that it should be given the same meaning that is now conveyed by a double of a bid of one.

There is but one other double which may be classed as informatory and it is really half informatory, half business. The opportunity to make it occurs only after a No Trump by the partner and a bid by the adversary to the right of the doubler of a suit in which the doubler has two tricks.

The theory is that such a double tells the No Trump bidder that the adverse suit is not dangerous and leaves it to him to decide whether to bid two No Trumps or allow the double to stand. Viewed superficially, this would seem to be sound bidding, but it does not stand a critical examination and does not work well in actual play.

---

After a thorough trial this idea was abandoned for three reasons:

1. Because it complicates the bidding, as misunderstandings are apt to arise between partners concerning their respective interpretations of the meaning of "initial." *With all doubles of a bid of one made informatory and all other doubles made business, misunderstandings should be impossible.*

2. Because the hand rarely occurs with which it is safe to force so high a bid from a partner who may have a "bust."

3. Because it eliminates the possibility of making a business double of an initial bid of two. This is too valuable a privilege to sacrifice.

## 168 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

The No Trump bidder when his partner makes this semi-informatory double cannot tell whether it has been justified by two bare tricks in the adverse suit or whether it has to sustain it both length and strength in that suit with possibly other strength. If it be the former (especially when the No Trump is of the borderline variety), the double should be taken out, as the defeat of the suit declaration is far from being ensured; if it be the latter, to take out the double may cost hundreds of points.

The best that the No Trump maker can do is to *guess*, and that is just what modern scientific bidders try to avoid doing.

Suppose the No Trump to have been bid with—

Spades	Ace, X, X,
Hearts	X,
Diamonds	Ace, King, Queen, X, X, X,
Clubs	X, X, X,

or

Spades	King, Knave, X,
Hearts	X, X,

Diamonds Ace, Queen, X,  
 Clubs Knave, X, X, X, X,  
 and the double of two Hearts to have been  
 made without a side trick with some such  
 Hearts as—

Ace, Queen,  
 Ace, Knave, X,  
 King, Knave, X,

or

Queen, Ten, X, X.

A game, with Hearts at 16, is quite  
 possible for the adversaries.

On the other hand, if the doubler have  
 some such holding in Hearts as—

Ace, Queen, X, X,  
 King, Knave, Ten, X,

or

Queen, Ten, X, X, X,

plus possibly some side strength, it is  
 most annoying for a doubler who has a  
 “killing” assured to have the initial  
 Declarer *guess* that he dare not risk a  
 double which would produce at least 400,  
 possibly 600.

## 170 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

The greater the strength of the doubler, the greater the probability that the initial bid was "border-line" and that the double will be taken out; the greater the weakness of the doubler, the greater the probability that the No Trump bidder will feel that he should permit the double to stand. It is not only a case in which a player is *forced to guess* but it is one in which *it is almost certain that he will guess wrong*. It is far better not to use this semi-informatory convention and consequently to allow the player who has the trump strength to decide between two No Trumps and the double.\*

### BUSINESS DOUBLES

With all informatory or semi-informatory doubles of a bid of more than one abandoned, every double, except the double of one, becomes a business double and a

\* There are some hands with apparently two tricks in an adverse suit which should pass. The No Trump maker has bid with the expectation that his partner has average strength. When all he has is, for example, King, Knave, X of the adverse suit, neither a raise nor a double is warranted. Of course if the original bidder is subsequently able to declare a Minor suit, the above holding would justify the partner in returning to the No Trump.

player who doubles any bid of two or more virtually says, "Partner, I am confident that we can defeat this declaration and I desire to receive a bonus of 100 instead of 50 for every trick that our adversaries fall short of their contract. I do not wish you to overbid unless your hand be of such peculiar character that you have reason to believe the double will not be very profitable and you are fairly sure you can go game with your declaration."

There are two classes of business doubles:

1. The double of a declaration which, if successful, will result in game whether or not it be doubled, such as a double of four Hearts with the score at love. This is known as a free double.
2. The double which would put the successful Declarer out, when if undoubled he would not secure game by fulfilling his contract, such as a double of two or three Hearts with a love score.

## 172 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

In the first instance, the doubler has nothing to lose except the difference in points which the Declarer may make as a result of the double. When, for example, the bid of four Hearts is doubled and the Declarer fulfils his contract the double costs exactly 82 points. If the Declarer fall one trick short, the double gains 50 points, so that if the doubler be in doubt as to which way that trick is going he knows that the odds are 82 to 50 against the double. That, however, is not all, the double gives the opponents the option of whether or not there shall be a redouble. When there is a redouble, the loss is increased 114 points, the gain 100 points, so in that case the odds are 196 to 150. It is evident, therefore, that even when a Declarer will go out in any event, it is not a particularly advantageous proposition for the doubler to give odds of approximately 8 to 5 or 4 to 3, if the chances be even. When the declaration is Spades or No Trump, the odds against

the double are slightly increased. When it is Diamonds or Clubs, the odds are slightly decreased.

A doubtful double should never be made when there is a chance that the partner may be able to make game in the suit he is declaring. For example, the initial Declarer calls three Spades; the Second Hand four Hearts. A doubtful double of four Hearts by the Third Hand under such circumstances would be a very bad declaration because the partner, upon the theory that the doubler expects to secure a large bonus, may be properly deterred from a successful declaration of four Spades.

While the greatest care should be exercised in determining when to double, a player cannot afford to have the reputation of never doubling, as that permits his adversaries to take undue liberties in bidding, but it is better to be ultra-conservative than to double foolishly.



## 174 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

### OVERBIDDING A PARTNER WHEN HE HAS BEEN DOUBLED

It is seldom sound bidding to take your partner out when he has been doubled. While this is a point upon which practically all agree, there are certain players who, while they concur in the theory of the proposition, are unable, in practice, to resist the temptation. Fully nine-tenths of such take-outs result disastrously.

When the partner of the player whose declaration has been doubled has strength, it will help to win the doubled declaration. When he is weak, the chances are the change will only make matters worse. If the doubler be a reckless Declarer, it is probable that the contract will be fulfilled. If the doubler be a sound Declarer, it is a safe assumption that he is prepared to double any other call and probably can do so with more effective results.

There are, of course, some hands with which a take-out is effective, and it is important that the bidder, who is prone to interfere with the doubled partner,

should thoroughly understand the character of these hands so that with any other holding he may be induced to remain silent. The only case in which the partner should be taken out when doubled is the unusual hand which cannot help the partner's declaration (when he has had reason to expect help),\* and yet which will materially aid in fulfilling the take-out declaration.

Suppose the bidding to be, Dealer No Trump, Second Hand two Hearts, Third Hand pass, Fourth Hand two Spades, Dealer three Diamonds, Second Hand double, and the Third Hand holds—

Spades	X, X,
Hearts	X, X, X, X,
Diamonds	X,
Clubs	Knave, Ten, X, X, X, X,

it would be sound bidding to take out with four Clubs. The hand is trickless in Diamonds, but of material assistance in

---

\* A bid made before the partner of the doubled player has had a chance to show whether he has any strength.

## 176 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Clubs, and the bidding would indicate that the Dealer has some strength in Clubs. In such case, although it increases the contract one, the take-out is justified. If, however, the hand be—

Spades	None,
Hearts	X, X, X,
Diamonds	X, X, X, X,
Clubs	Knave, Ten, X, X, X, X,

the take-out would be most unwise, as the hand will probably aid the partner by its ability to ruff Spades.

Whenever the hand can help the partner in the declaration which has been doubled, it is foolish to change it, as the fulfilling of a doubled declaration is exceptionally remunerative. Suppose, for example, a Dealer bids two Hearts, Second and Third Hands pass, Fourth Hand two Spades, Dealer three Hearts, Second Hand doubles, and the Third Hand holds—

Spades	King, Queen,
Hearts	None,
Diamonds	Ace, King, X, X, X, X,
Clubs	X, X, X, X, X,

it is possible, although not probable, that four Diamonds might be made, but the partner has called three Hearts without assistance. This hand assures one Spade and, unless ruffed, two Diamonds. If the partner be a sound bidder his success is beyond question. It is certainly better to win three or more Hearts worth 16 per trick than to take the chance of making four Diamonds worth seven per trick.

### **THE VALUE OF A GAME**

At times the Auction player finds himself in the pleasing situation where he knows that he can either defeat the adverse declaration or, by overbidding it, win the game. This forces him to determine whether the game is worth more than the bonus the double will produce. At other times the situation is reversed and the player feels confident that his opponents will go game with their bid, and that he cannot make good his contract should he overcall. Then he has to decide whether, in order to save the game, it is advisable to indulge

## 178 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

in a practice generally known in Auction parlance as "flag-flying." This, in plain English, is the making of a hopeless bid with the idea that it will force the adversaries to a contract they cannot fulfil; or, if the bid be left in, that the loss will be less than the value of the game the adversaries would have scored. In order to properly decide either of the above questions the Auction player must know the exact value of a game so that he can accurately estimate how much he is giving up when, in the first case, he decides to double the adverse bid, or how much he is saving when, in the second, he determines to bid higher than the value of his cards warrants.

It is remarkable, in spite of all that has been written on this subject, how many players are still vague in their ideas as to the value of a game, and how many believe that as the situation is then desperate, the time to flag-fly is when the game score is one to nothing against them.

The simplest and most accurate method

of determining what a game is worth is to suppose that chips are being used and that at the beginning of a rubber each side puts 250 chips into a pool, making a total of 500, which is to become the property of the winners of the rubber. Before a player looks at a card, the interest of his side is, of course, one-half of the pool, or 250. When a pair lose the first game, their chance of winning the pool is one in four; that is, they have an even chance (one out of two) of winning the next game, but that only gives them an even chance (one out of two once more) of winning the rubber; so the partners who have lost the first game have but one chance in four of winning the pool, and their interest therein is 125. Conversely, the players who take the first game have three chances out of four of winning the rubber, and their interest in the pool at that time is 375. This, of course, means that the interest of the winners has increased 125, that of the losers decreased 125, by reason of the outcome of the first game.

## 180 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Should the losers of the first game win the second, their interest would move up from one in four to two in four, or from 125 to 250, a gain of 125; and the interest of the players who won the first game and lost the second would be similarly decreased from 375 to 250, once more a difference of 125. By losing the second game, the interest of the players who lost the first is decreased from 125 to zero, and that of the winners is increased from 375 to 500; so it becomes apparent that the first and second games are each worth exactly the same, namely, 125.

As the third game is played only when each side has won one, and when the interest of each side in the pool is consequently 250 (it being once more an equal chance), the winners of the third game increase their interest in the pool from 250 to 500, or a gain of 250, and the losers drop from 250 to zero, or a loss of 250; which conclusively fixes the value of the third game at twice the amount of either of the first two, or 250. To these respective game

values of 125 and 250 must be added the trick and honor scores of the side scoring game.

The conclusion, therefore, is:

It is not wise to double, instead of winning the first or second game, unless the double win a net (that is the amount of penalty less honors scored by the other side) greater than 125 plus the points, tricks and honors that would be scored with the game. This means that getting 100 instead of a first or second game is always a losing proposition, getting 200 may show a loss or gain, and getting 300 is generally quite a profitable transaction. Upon this basis of figuring it is not wise to double, instead of winning, the third game unless the double will win at least 400. Conversely, it is wise to lose 100 instead of allowing the adversaries to win either the first or second game and to lose 200 (if the honor score involved be large, 300) instead of allowing the adversaries to win the third game.

These figures should be remembered and



## 182 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

given due consideration whenever any of these situations occur in actual play; but while the mathematical part of the proposition as given above is unquestionably sound, there are one or two points regarding which the player must be positively convinced before he refuses a profitable double or offers a flag-flying sacrifice.

These points are:

(a) Before giving up a double the Declarer should be confident—

(1) That it will not net more than he anticipates.

(2) That game is sure in the declaration he is making.

(b) Before starting the flag-flying he should be convinced—

(1) That it will not cost more than he estimates the sacrifice to be worth.

(2) That the adversaries will positively go game unless overcalled.

It is obviously most foolish to be set 100 or 200, to keep the opponents from making

some trivial score such as 24 with 32 honors or to give up a double worth several hundred merely to fall a trick short of game or, worse still, to fail to fulfil the contract.

Of course it will be understood that while the figures given above are sound and while in the long run, those who are guided by them will find the outcome eminently satisfactory, the result in each particular case generally depends upon which side gets the next game-going hand (an even chance). A couple of examples will demonstrate this.

Let us suppose that a player with a game out (that is with the game score 1-0 against him) makes up his mind that it is his duty to "save the rubber" regardless of the expense. Let us further suppose that the game of the adversaries shows a net of 60 for them and that they now can go out making a score of 40 and 32 which would give them a rubber of 382 points. Suppose that all the flag-flyer can make is 28 honors and that a double will cost him 400. The game, as it is not the

## 184 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

third, is worth only 125, which, added to 40, 32, and 28 equals 225. So he is 175 to the bad on his operation. Let us suppose the next deal has a 40-40 hand for one side or the other—an even chance depending just where the cards are cut. If the adversaries get the game hand they win a rubber of 762, in which case the flag-flying has cost 380 points. Should the game hand come to the side of the venturesome one, the rubber will merely stand one game all. He will have to get another game hand to win it, so he has risked a loss of 380 merely to place himself on even terms.

One more case.

During the third game of a rubber a player detects an adversary in the most flagrant kind of flag-flying and doubles instead of taking in the rubber. The scores of the two sides made during the first two games exactly balance, and the score the doubler would have made had he advanced his bid would have been 50 and 30. This would have given him a rubber of 330 points. He, however,

doubles four Hearts and gets 500, less 16 honors, or a net of 484. On the basis of the figures above given this would be a most excellent operation, as it shows a gain of 154 points ( $484 - 330 = 154$ ). In this particular case, however, let us suppose that on the next hand the other side goes out with a score of 50 and 30. That would leave the doubler with a rubber score of only 154 instead of 330, or a loss of 176 by a double that won 500.

It is the long run, however, not the particular case, that should be considered. In this case if the doubler be fortunate enough on the next deal to hold the 50-30 hand, his score for the rubber will be 814, or a gain of 484. In other words, he stands to win 484 or lose 176, and it is an even chance which will happen.

To apply the above doctrine whenever the position of the cards is marked so clearly that the Declarer can accurately diagnose the situation, is sure in the end to prove most advantageous.

Of course, it is generally very hard to be

absolutely sure exactly how much a double will produce, and all the player can do is to estimate as accurately as possible, always remembering that a first or second game is only worth 125, just half as much as a third, and that the tricks and honors are apt to swell these figures to approximately 225 and 350 respectively.

Before leaving this subject a word of caution is possibly in order. While it is mathematically a sound gamble to lose 300 rather than to permit the adversaries to win a rubber game, it is most dangerous for the player of average ability to plan to do so. In the first place, he may be mistaken in his idea that the other side will go game, in which case he is throwing his hundreds away. Even if the adverse game be sure, he may readily overestimate his trick-taking ability and the disaster he is inviting may be greater than he anticipates. Flag-flying with the expectation of a 100 loss often results in a much larger score for the opponents. Deliberately

offering a 300 gambit is proportionately dangerous.

The sanguine flag-flyer is a dangerous partner and while he has a much greater defence when he suffers a penalty to save a third game than he can offer earlier in the rubber, nevertheless, it is so hard during the declaration to accurately estimate the result of the play that it generally turns out that the sacrifice is greater than the exigencies of the situation justify.

## XI

### THE AUCTION LAWS OF 1917

Comparing the Auction Laws of 1917 with the Code of 1915, we do not find any radical alterations, although the wording of more than half of the ninety-eight laws has been changed. In the main the alterations have been made merely to simplify certain laws which have hitherto possibly failed to make their meaning perfectly clear. There are, however, a few new provisions of importance with which every player should be familiar.

In Law 1, the new code returns to the old definition of the winners of the rubber. Prior to the adoption of the Laws of 1915, winning two games had always been considered to be the winning of the rubber, regardless of which side was ahead on the point score. It was found, however, that in one respect this method of determining the winners at times operated unjustly. A player who is playing

for "love" but who has bet that he will win the rubber is tempted to indulge in extravagant flag-flying, in order to win his bet, if winning two games regardless of how the points stand wins the rubber. This, apparently, is an unfair interpretation of the meaning of the bet and is obviously a selfish sacrifice of a partner's score.

To remedy this the Laws of 1915 provided that the rubber was won by the side with the higher point score after the 250 had been awarded to the winners of the two games.

While, when this change was made, it seemed to be wise, it has not proved popular with the Auction public. After being accustomed for so many years to the understanding that the winning of two games constituted the winning of the rubber (even when the final score showed a plus for the opponents), the rank and file of players have not favored the alteration. Possibly the reason for the innovation has not been fully understood; but, be



## 190 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

that as it may, there has been a strong demand for a return to the old order of things. The law makers have bowed to the popular will and once again it has become possible to win a losing rubber.

An important addition has been made to Law 11, which permits the termination, by agreement, at a specified time of an unfinished rubber. This addition (numbered 11a) provides that, when there has been no agreement concerning the ending the rubber and when one of the players is obliged to leave before it is finished, without being able to furnish a substitute, his adversaries are given the option of cancelling the rubber or of counting it as if there had been an agreement, in accordance with the terms of Law 11, to stop at that time. This will avoid all discussion concerning what should be done.

The next alteration of importance is in Law 49, which has been completely rewritten. This is the law covering bids out of turn, for which the former penalty was a new deal. That, in the majority of

cases, has proven to be unduly severe. It is really the last survivor (except possibly the revoke penalty, and that was reduced only a few years ago) of a number of drastic penalties, most of which were inherited from Whist and Bridge, which were in force when Auction first became popular. A player who, with a big hand, inadvertently bids out of turn has improperly given valuable information to his partner, but he has not committed such a heinous offence that he deserves to be punished by having a deal thrown out which if played might be a sure game for him. The new law allows the adversaries to accept or cancel the improper bid and in the latter event closes the mouth of the partner who has received the illegitimate information, but the offender, who has not in any way benefited by his own mistake, may still bid and the deal stands. This punishment appears to more nearly fit the crime.

For doubling when it is the partner's turn to declare a serious—indeed a most

## 192 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

suspicious—offence the penalty provided by 49*a* is even more drastic than before, but no treatment is too harsh for the player guilty of this offence. Law 49*b* contains the old provisions concerning a pass out of turn.

Law 52 covers a case concerning which former codes have been strangely silent. It penalizes a player who before or during the declaration gives his partner any information concerning his hand other than that conveyed by a legitimate bid, pass or double. Such an offence is, unfortunately, too common. Such remarks as "I do not know which suit to bid;" "I would help you, partner, were I sure your bid was sound;" "I have a weak hand, but will raise you just once;" "You bid my suit;" "I would have doubled if you had given me the chance," are too frequently made even in games of a class which would seemingly preclude the occurrence of such gross violations of the proprieties. The new law prohibits the part-

ner who is thus illegally informed from further participation in the bidding.

The next change of note is in the rights of the Dummy. Two new sections, (j) and (k), are added to Law 60, giving additional privileges to the Dummy who "makes his eyes behave" to the extent that they do not "*intentionally*" see an unplayed adverse card. These sections give such a Dummy the privilege of calling the attention of the Declarer to any right which he may have under any law and of directing a Declarer who would concede a trick or tricks to play out the hand. The latter, especially with a careless partner, is at times most valuable. It is to be hoped that this additional legislation in favor of a Dummy who is not unduly curious will, for reasons of self-advantage, induce players to abandon the pernicious practice of continually looking first at one adverse hand and then at the other. This all too prevalent habit has in the past annoyed adversaries, delayed games and, when the "rubbering" Dummy further

offended by forgetting his name and becoming talkative, has caused complications of a most unpleasant character.

The provisions of the laws governing exposed cards (65-70 inclusive) have not been altered, but the wording has been materially changed so that their meaning cannot be misunderstood.

The provisions now included in Law 95 formerly appeared in the rules of etiquette; it has been deemed proper that they should be incorporated in the code.

The labors of the Committee in drafting the Code of 1917 were not as exacting as in previous years, because the members were only called upon to improve the existing laws. In the past the annual session has been mainly devoted to the consideration and, as a rule, rejection of all sorts and kinds of Auction schemes, ranging in the order of merit from the Nullo (which unquestionably possessed many advantages, but was too difficult for the average player to master, and which now, fortunately for the future of the game, is quite

dead) to the Imperial Club (which was a mere Auction absurdity).

The complete satisfaction of the Auction players of the country with the general character of the game, as it has been played during 1916, has been most strikingly evidenced by the remarkable absence of requests for a change. Prior to the adoption of the Code of 1915, hardly a week went by without the attention of the Committee being called to some wonderful scheme to improve the game; but in the year and a half which followed, not a single innovation was mentioned until the day of the final session of the Committee, when a plan, which was reported to have found favor abroad, was suggested. This certainly proves that the Auction-playing public is satisfied to stand pat and the 1917 code permits them to do so.

The one proposed alteration in the game, referred to above, which the Committee declined to seriously consider is, however, most radical. It is, in brief, the proposition that a player be permitted to

## 196 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

score in his trick column only the amount of his bid, the excess, if any, to be scored in his honor column. In other words, a bid of one Heart which resulted in the taking of ten tricks would count eight points in the trick column, twenty-four points in the honor column.

The plan, viewed from the standpoint of the expert, has one great argument in its favor; it places a heavy premium upon the ability of partners during the bidding to estimate accurately the trick-taking value of their combined hands. Like many other proposed innovations that have been abandoned, it is, however, subject to the serious objection that it greatly militates in favor of the expert as against the average player, and that it almost legislates the poor bidder out of the game. Many contend that the one great objection to our Auction of today is that the percentage in favor of skill is too high. This innovation would increase that percentage enormously.

Other objections to the plan, which at

first thought appear to be serious, are that it would unduly extend the duration of rubbers, as many more contracts would fail and many others, which under the present system produce a game, would, with the proposed scoring limit adopted, fail to do so. Furthermore, it is hard to conceive that any such system could be adopted without increasing the number of acrimonious debates between partners which at times are, unfortunately, incidents of the present game. For these various reasons the plan was rejected without being accorded the formality of a thorough trial.

While considering the Code of 1917, which it is hoped may remain in force without alteration well beyond the duration of the year of its adoption, it is possibly not out of place to refer to a trait of Auction reasoning which seems to be incident to many social games. It is evidenced by the hesitation of some players to enforce penalties to which they are entitled. There must be laws; the game



## 198 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

could not be played without them; there must be penalties or the laws would be dead letters. If, as is the case in some social games, penalties are at times enforced and at others unclaimed, there is apt to be the thought that the claimant is unduly technical when any penalty, no matter how just it may be, is demanded. When all penalties are exacted there is no possibility for any such misunderstanding. The penalty for the revoke is unquestionably the most severe of all. Every one realizes that in nine revokes out of ten the punishment is far greater than the offence warrants, but in that tenth case the revoke may so greatly benefit its maker that the retention of the present severe penalty seems necessary. In spite of this, no one ever waives, or expects to have waived, this punitive penalty for, what is at most, a careless act, even when the revoke has not in any way affected the winning or losing of a trick. Many players, nevertheless, hesitate to enforce and feel aggrieved when compelled to suf-

fer some other penalty which is a fitting punishment for some inexcusable offence. For example, being compelled to play the first card touched in the Dummy (Law 64) or being charged twenty-five honor points for looking at a trick that has been turned and quitted (Law 90). The wisest method is to claim all penalties to which you are entitled and to gracefully submit to any which your opponents may have the right to demand, regarding both incidents as essential parts of the game.

Due to the courtesy of the Whist Club of New York, which is gratefully acknowledged, the full text of the Code of 1917 follows:

## **THE LAWS OF AUCTION**

(Effective January 1, 1917)

---

### **THE RUBBER**

1. A rubber continues until one side wins it by winning two games. When the first two games decide the rubber, a third is not played.

## 200 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

### SCORING

2. Each side has a trick score and a score for all other counts, generally known as the honor score. In the trick score the only entries made are points for tricks won (see Law 3), which count both toward the game and in the total of the rubber.

All other points, including those scored for honors, penalties, slam, little slam, and undertricks, are recorded in the honor score, which counts only in the total of the rubber.

3. When the declarer wins the number of tricks bid or more, each above six\* counts on the trick score: six points when clubs are trumps, seven when diamonds are trumps, eight when hearts are trumps, nine when spades are trumps, and ten when the declaration is no trump.

4. A game consists of thirty points made by tricks alone. Every deal is played out, whether or not during it the game be concluded, and any points made (even if in excess of thirty) are counted.

---

\* Such tricks are generally called "odd tricks."

## AUCTION DECLARATIONS 201

5. The ace, king, queen, knave, and ten of the trump suit are the honors; when no trump is declared, the aces are the honors.

6. Honors are credited to the original holders; they are valued as follows:

WHEN A TRUMP IS DECLARED									
3* honors held between partners equal value of 2 tricks.									
4	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	4	"
5	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	5	"
4	"	in 1 hand				"	"	8	"
4	"	"	1	"	{ 5th in partner's hand }	"	"	9	"
5	"	"	1	"		"	"	10	"

---

WHEN NO TRUMP IS DECLARED									
3 aces held between partners count 30									
4	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	40	
4	"	"	in one hand				"	100	

\* Frequently called "simple honors."

7. Slam is made when partners take thirteen tricks.\* It counts 100 points in the honor score.

8. Little slam is made when partners take twelve tricks.† It counts 50 points in the honor score.

\* Law 84 prohibits a revoking side from scoring slam, and provides that tricks received by the declarer as penalty for a revoke shall not entitle him to a slam not otherwise obtained.

† Law 84 prohibits a revoking side from scoring little slam, and provides that tricks received by the declarer

## 202 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

9. The value of honors, slam, or little slam is not affected by doubling or redoubling.

10. At the end of a rubber the winners score 250 points additional.

The trick, honor and bonus scores of each side are then added and the size of the rubber is the difference between the respective totals.

The losers of the rubber are entitled to the difference when they have the larger total.

11. When a rubber is started with the agreement that the play shall terminate (*i. e.*, no new deal shall commence) at a specified time, and the rubber is unfinished at that hour, the score is made up as it stands, 125 being added to the score of the winners of a game. A deal if started must be played out.

11a. If a rubber be started without any agreement as to its termination and before its conclusion one player leaves without

---

as penalty for a revoke shall not entitle him to a little slam not otherwise obtained. When a declarer bids 7 and takes twelve tricks he counts 50 for little slam, although his declaration fails.

appointing an acceptable substitute (see Law 26), his adversaries have the right to elect whether the score be cancelled or counted as if covered by Law 11.

12. A proved error in the honor score may be corrected at any time before the score of the rubber has been made up and agreed upon.

13. A proved error in the trick score may be corrected at any time before a declaration has been made in the following game, or, if it occur in the final game of the rubber, before the score has been made up and agreed upon.

### CUTTING

14. In cutting, the ace is the lowest, the king the highest card; between cards of otherwise equal value the spade is the lowest, the heart next, the diamond next, and the club the highest.

15. Every player must cut from the same pack.

16. Should a player expose more than one card, the highest is his cut, except as provided for in Law 19.

## 204 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

### FORMING TABLES

17. Those first in the room have the prior right to play. Candidates of equal standing decide their order by cutting; those who cut lowest play first.

18. Six players constitute a complete table.

19. After the table has been formed, the players cut to decide upon partners, the two lower play against the two higher. In cutting for partners, should a player expose more than one card he must cut again. The lowest is the dealer, who has choice of cards and seats, and, having made his selection, must abide by it.\*

20. The right to succeed players as they retire is acquired by announcing the desire to do so, and such announcements, in the order made, entitle candidates to places as vacancies occur.

### CUTTING OUT

21. If, at the end of a rubber, admission be claimed by one or two candidates, the player or players who have played the

\* He may consult his partner before making his decision.

greatest number of consecutive rubbers withdraw; when more players than there are candidates have played the same number, the outgoers are decided by cutting; the highest are out.\*

### **RIGHT OF ENTRY**

22. At the beginning of a rubber a candidate is not entitled to enter a table unless he declare his intention before any player cut, either for partners, for a new rubber, or for cutting out.

23. In the formation of new tables candidates who have not played at an existing table have the prior right of entry. Others determine their right to admission by cutting.

24. When one or more players belonging to an existing table aid in making up a new one, which cannot be formed without him or them, he or they shall be the last to cut out.

25. A player belonging to one table who enters another, or announces a desire to do

---

\* See Law 14 as to value of cards in cutting.



## 206 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

so, forfeits his rights at his original table, unless the new table cannot be formed without him, in which case he may retain his position at his original table by announcing his intention to return as soon as his place at the new table can be filled.

26. Should a player leave a table during the progress of a rubber, he may, with the consent of the three others, appoint a substitute to play during his absence; but such appointment becomes void upon the conclusion of the rubber, and does not in any way affect the rights of the substitute.

27. If a player break up a table, the others have a prior right of entry elsewhere.

### SHUFFLING

28. The pack must not be shuffled below the table nor so the face of any card be seen.

29. The dealer's partner must collect and shuffle the cards from the preceding deal. He must then place them face downward to the left of the next dealer, where

they must remain untouched until the end of the current deal.

30. At the conclusion of the deal the next dealer has the right to shuffle his pack, but should a card or cards be seen during his shuffling or while the pack is being cut, he must reshuffle.\*

### THE DEAL

31. Players deal in turn; the order of dealing is to the left.

32. Immediately before the deal, the player on the dealer's right cuts, so that each packet contains at least four cards. When in or after cutting, and prior to the beginning of the deal, a card is exposed, or when any doubt exists as to the place of the cut, the dealer must reshuffle and the same player must cut again.

33. After the pack has been properly cut, it should not be reshuffled or recut except as provided in Law 32.

34. Should the dealer shuffle after the

---

\* The dealer has the right to shuffle last except in the case covered by Law 34.

## 208 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

cut, his adversaries may subsequently shuffle and the pack must be cut again.

35. The fifty-two cards must be dealt face downward. The deal is completed when the last card is dealt.

36. In the event of a misdeal, the same pack must be dealt again by the same player.

### A NEW DEAL

37. There *must* be a new deal:

- (a) If the cards be not dealt, beginning at the dealer's left, into four packets, one at a time and in regular rotation.
- (b) If, during a deal, or during the play, the pack be proved incorrect.\*
- (c) If, during a deal, any card be faced in the pack or exposed, on, above, or below the table.
- (d) If more than thirteen cards be dealt to any player.†

---

\* A correct pack contains fifty-two cards divided into four suits of thirteen cards each, each suit containing one card of each denomination.

† This error, whenever discovered, renders a new deal necessary.

- (e) If the last card do not come in its regular order to the dealer.
- (f) If the dealer omit having the pack cut, deal out of turn or with the adversaries' cards, and either adversary call attention to the fact before the end of the deal and before looking at any of his cards.
- (g) If, before, during, or at the conclusion of the play, one player hold more than the proper number of cards and another less.

38. Should a correction of any offense mentioned in 37 (f) not be made in time, or should an adversary who has looked at any of his cards be the first to call attention to the error, the deal stands, and the game proceeds as if the deal had been correct, the player to the left dealing next. When the deal has been with the wrong cards, the next dealer when it is his turn to deal may take whichever pack he prefers.

## 210 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

39. If, prior to the cut for the following deal, a pack be proved incorrect, the deal is void, but all prior scores stand.

The pack is not incorrect when a missing card or cards are found in the other pack, among the quitted tricks, below the table, or in any other place which makes it possible that such card or cards were part of the pack during the deal.

40. Should three players have their proper number of cards, the fourth, less, the missing card or cards, if found, belong to him, and he, unless dummy, is answerable for any established revoke or revokes he may have made just as if the missing card or cards had been continuously in his hand. When a card is missing, any player may search the other pack, the quitted tricks, or elsewhere for it.\*

41. A player may not cut, shuffle, or deal for his partner if either adversary object.

41a. A player may not lift from the

---

\* The fact that a deal is concluded without any claim of irregularity shall be deemed as conclusive that such card was part of the pack during the deal.

table and look at any of his cards until the end of the deal. The penalty for the violation of this law is 25 points in the adverse honor score for each card so examined.

### THE DECLARATION

42. The dealer, having examined his hand, must either pass or declare to win at least one odd trick,\* either with a specified suit as trump or at no trump.

43. The dealer having declared or passed, each player in turn, beginning on the dealer's left, must pass, make a higher declaration, double the last declaration made by an opponent, or redouble an opponent's double, subject to the provisions of Law 56.

44. When all four players pass their first opportunity to declare, the deal passes to the next player.

45. The order in value of declarations from the lowest up is clubs, diamonds, hearts, spades, no trump.

---

\* One trick more than six.

## 212 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

To overbid a declaration, a player must bid, either

- (a) An equal number of tricks of a more valuable declaration, or
- (b) A greater number of tricks.

*E. g.*, 3 spades over 3 diamonds; 5 clubs over 4 hearts; 4 diamonds over 3 no trump.

46. A player in his turn may overbid the previous adverse declaration any number of times, and may also overbid his partner, but he cannot overbid his own declaration which has been passed by the three others.\*

47. The player who makes the final declaration† must play the combined hands, his partner becoming dummy, unless the suit or no trump finally declared was bid by the partner before it was called by the final declarer, in which case the partner, no

---

\* Seven is the maximum declaration, and if it be made, the only bid thereafter permitted (except a double) is seven of a higher valued declaration.

† A declaration becomes final when it has been passed by three players.

matter what bids have intervened, must play the combined hands.

48. When the player of the two hands (hereinafter termed "the declarer") wins at least as many tricks as he declared, he scores the full value of the tricks won (see Law 3).\*

48a. When the declarer fails to win as many tricks as he declares, neither he nor his adversaries score anything toward the game, but his adversaries score in their honor column 50 points for each undertrick (*i. e.*, each trick short of the number declared). If the declaration be doubled, the adversaries score 100 points; if redoubled, 200 points for each undertrick.

49. If a player make a declaration (other than a double† or a pass‡) out of turn either adversary may cancel or accept it.

When a declaration out of turn is cancelled the player whose turn it was to declare bids, and the partner of the offend-

---

\* For amount scored by declarer, if doubled, see Laws 55 and 58.

† See Law 49a.

‡ See Law 49b.



## 214 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

ing player may not thereafter participate in the declaration.

When a declaration out of turn is accepted it becomes the turn of the player to the left of the offender to declare and the partner of the offending player retains the right to participate in the declaration.

After a declaration out of turn, should the adversary to the left of the offender either pass, double, or declare before the improper bid is accepted or cancelled, such act accepts the bid and thereby makes it the turn of said adversary.

Should the adversary to the right of a player who has bid out of turn be the proper declarer, and should he pass, double, or declare before the improper bid be accepted or cancelled, such act is a cancellation of the improper declaration.

When a bid out of turn is cancelled, it having been the turn of the partner of the offending player to declare, such turn passes to the adversary on the left of said partner.

49a. If a player double, or redouble

when it is his partner's turn to declare, either adversary may—

- (a) Accept the double or redouble as if it had been made in turn.
- (b) Demand a new deal.
- (c) Call the bid that was doubled or redoubled final, and elect whether the double or redouble stand.

There is no penalty for a double or redouble out of turn when the partner of the offender has already passed the declaration.\*

When a declaration is made final neither a redouble nor any other declaration may be made.

49*b*. A pass out of turn cannot be penalized and does not affect the order of bidding. The bidding is continued by the player whose turn it was when the pass out of turn was made.

The player who has passed out of turn may only re-enter the bidding in case the declaration he has passed be overbid or doubled.

---

\* See Law 50*b*.

## 216 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Should the adversary to the left of a player who passes out of turn be misled thereby and either pass or declare, such act accepts the pass as being in turn.

50. If a player make an insufficient declaration, either adversary may demand that it be made sufficient in the declaration named, in which case the partner of the declarer may not further declare unless an adversary subsequently bid or double.

50a. If a player who has been debarred from bidding under Laws 49, 50, 52, or 66, during the period of such prohibition, make any declaration (other than passing), either adversary may decide whether such declaration stand, and neither the offending player nor his partner may further participate in the bidding even if the adversaries double or declare.

50b. A penalty for a declaration out of turn (see Law 49), an insufficient declaration (see Law 50), or a bid when prohibited (see Law 50a) may not be enforced

if either adversary pass, double, or declare before the penalty be demanded.\*

50c. Laws which give to either adversary the right to enforce a penalty, do not permit consultation. Either adversary may call attention to the offence and select or forego a penalty, or may pass the privilege to his partner. If consultation take place the right to demand a penalty is forfeited.† The first decision made by either adversary is final and cannot be altered.‡

51. At any time during the declaration, a question asked by a player concerning any previous bid must be answered, but, after the final declaration has been accepted, if an adversary of the declarer inform his partner regarding any previous declaration, the declarer may call a lead from the adversary whose next turn it is to lead.

---

\* When the penalty for an insufficient declaration is not demanded, the bid over which it was made may be repeated unless some higher bid has intervened.

† The question, "Partner, will you select the penalty, or shall I?" is a form of consultation and is not permitted.

‡ When a player directs his partner to select the penalty and the partner fails to do so or attempts to refer the privilege back, the right is forfeited.

## 218 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

If the dummy give such information to the declarer, either adversary of the declarer may call a lead when it is the next turn of the declarer to lead from either hand. A player, however, at any time may ask what declaration is being played and the question must be answered.

52. If before or during the declaration a player give any information concerning his hand other than that conveyed by a legitimate declaration, his partner may not thereafter participate in the bidding.

53. A double once made may not be altered.

No declaration may be altered after the next player acts.\*

Before action by the next player a no trump or suit declaration may be changed:

- (a) To correct the amount of an insufficient bid.
- (b) To correct the denomination but not the size of a bid in which, due to a *lapsus linguæ*, a suit or no trump

---

\* Such an alteration may be penalized as a bid out of turn. (See Law 49.)

has been called which the declarer did not intend to name.

No other alteration may be made.

54. After the final declaration has been accepted, the play begins; the player on the left of the declarer leads.

### **DOUBLING AND REDOUBLING**

55. Doubling and redoubling doubles and quadruples the value of each trick over six, but it does not alter the value of a declaration; *e. g.*, a declaration of "three clubs" is higher than "two spades" doubled or redoubled.

56. Any declaration may be doubled and redoubled once, but not more; a player may not double his partner's declaration, nor redouble his partner's double, but he may redouble a declaration of his partner which has been doubled by an adversary.

The penalty for redoubling more than once is 100 points in the adverse honor score or a new deal; for doubling a partner's declaration, or redoubling a partner's double it is 50 points in the adverse honor

## 220 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

score. Either adversary may demand any penalty enforceable under this law.

57. Doubling or redoubling reopens the bidding. When a declaration has been doubled or redoubled, any one of the three succeeding players, including the player whose declaration has been doubled, may, in his proper turn, make a further declaration of higher value.

58. When a player whose declaration has been doubled wins the declared number of tricks, he scores a bonus of 50 points in his honor score, and a further 50 points for each additional trick. When he or his partner has redoubled, he scores 100 points for making the contract and an additional 100 for each extra trick.

### DUMMY\*

59. As soon as the player on the left of the declarer leads, the declarer's partner places his cards face upward on the table, and the declarer plays the cards from that hand.

---

\* For additional laws affecting dummy, see 51 and 93.

60. The partner of the declarer has all the rights of a player (including the right to call attention to a lead from the wrong hand), until his cards are placed face upward on the table.\* He then becomes the dummy, and takes no part whatever in the play, except that he has the right:

- (a) To call the declarer's attention to the fact that too many or too few cards have been played to a trick;
- (b) to correct an improper claim of either adversary;
- (c) to call attention to a trick erroneously taken by either side;
- (d) to participate in the discussion of any disputed question of fact after it has arisen between the declarer and either adversary;
- (e) to correct an erroneous score;
- (f) to consult with and advise the declarer as to which penalty to exact for a revoke;
- (g) to ask the declarer whether he have any of a suit he has renounced.

---

\* The penalty is determined by the declarer (see Law 67).



## 222 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

The dummy, if he have not intentionally looked at any card in the hand of a player, has also the following additional rights:

- (*h*) To call the attention of the declarer to an established adverse revoke;
- (*i*) to call the attention of the declarer to a card exposed by an adversary or to an adverse lead out of turn;
- (*j*) to call the attention of the declarer to any right which he may have under any law;
- (*k*) to direct the declarer who would concede a trick or tricks to the adversaries to play out the hand.\*

61. Should the dummy call attention to any other incident in the play in consequence of which any penalty might have been exacted, the declarer may not exact such penalty. Should the dummy avail himself of rights (*h*), (*i*), (*j*), or (*k*), after intentionally looking at a card in the hand of a player, the declarer may not benefit thereby.

---

\* See Law 95.

62. If the dummy, by touching a card or otherwise suggest the play of one of his cards, either adversary may require the declarer to play or not to play such card.

62a. If the dummy call to the attention of the declarer that he is about to lead from the wrong hand, either adversary may require that the lead be made from that hand.

63. Dummy is not subject to the revoke penalty; if he revoke and the error be not discovered until the trick be turned and quitted, whether by the rightful winners or not, the revoke may not be corrected.

64. A card from the declarer's hand is not played until actually quitted, but should he name or touch a card in the dummy, such card is played unless he say, "I arrange," or words to that effect. If he simultaneously touch two or more such cards, he may elect which to play.

### **EXPOSED CARDS**

65. The following are exposed cards:

- (1) Two or more cards played simultaneously;

## 224 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

- (2) a card dropped face upward on the table, even though snatched up so quickly that it cannot be named;
- (3) a card so held by a player that his partner sees any portion of its face;
- (4) a card mentioned by either adversary as being held in his or his partner's hand.

A card dropped on the floor or elsewhere below the table and not seen by the partner,\* or so held that it is seen by an adversary but not by the partner, is not an exposed card.

### CARDS EXPOSED BEFORE PLAY

66. After the deal and before the declaration has been finally determined, if any player lead or expose a card, his partner may not thereafter bid or double during that declaration,† and the card, if it belong to an adversary of the eventual

---

\* If seen by the partner it is an exposed card.

† See Law 50a.

declarer, becomes an exposed card.\* When the partner of the offending player is the original leader, the declarer may also prohibit the initial lead of the suit of the exposed card.

67. After the final declaration has been accepted and before the lead, if the partner of the proper leader expose or lead a card, the declarer may treat it as exposed or may call a suit from the proper leader. A card exposed by the leader, after the final declaration and before the lead, is subject to call.\*

### **CARDS EXPOSED DURING PLAY**

68. An exposed card must be left face upward on the table.

Until it is played the declarer has the right to call it at any time when it is the turn of its owner to play or lead, but the owner may play or lead it whenever he has the opportunity.

69. A player cannot be compelled to

---

\* See Law 68.

## 226 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

play a card which would oblige him to revoke.

70. Should an exposed card be called and the player be unable to obey the call because he is obliged to follow suit, the card is still exposed and the call may be repeated any number of times until the card is played.

71. Two or more cards played simultaneously by either of the declarer's adversaries give the declarer the right to call any one of such cards to the current trick and to treat the other card or cards as exposed.

72. Should an adversary of the declarer expose his last card before his partner play to the twelfth trick, the two cards in his partner's hand become exposed, must be laid face upward on the table, and are subject to call.

73. If, without waiting for his partner to play, either of the declarer's adversaries play or lead a winning card, as against the declarer and dummy and continue (without waiting for his partner to play) to lead

several such cards, the declarer may demand that the partner of the player in fault win, if he can, the first or any other of these tricks. The other cards thus improperly played are exposed.

74. If either or both of the declarer's adversaries throw his or their cards face upward on the table, such cards are exposed and liable to be called; but if either adversary retain his hand, he cannot be forced to abandon it. Cards exposed by the declarer are not liable to be called. If the declarer say, "I have the rest," or any words indicating the remaining tricks or any number thereof are his, he may be required to place his cards face upward on the table. He is not then allowed to call any cards his adversaries may have exposed, nor to take any finesse, not previously proven a winner, unless he announce it when making his claim.

75. If a player who has rendered himself liable to have the highest or lowest of a suit called (Laws 80, 86, and 92) fail to play as directed, or if, when called on to

## 228 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

lead one suit, he lead another, having in his hand one or more cards of the suit demanded (Laws 66, 76, and 93), or if, when called upon to win or lose a trick, he fail to do so when he can (Laws 73, 80, and 92), or if, when called upon not to play a suit, he fail to play as directed (Laws 66, 67) he is liable to the penalty for revoke (Law 84), unless such play be corrected before the trick be turned and quitted.

### LEADS OUT OF TURN

76. If an adversary of the declarer lead out of turn, the declarer may treat the card so led as exposed or may call a suit as soon as it is the turn of either adversary to lead. Should they lead simultaneously, the lead from the proper hand stands, and the other card is exposed.

77. If the declarer lead out of turn, either from his own hand or dummy, he incurs no penalty, but he may not rectify the error unless directed to do so by an adver-

sary.\* If the second hand play, the lead is accepted.

78. If an adversary of the declarer lead out of turn, and the declarer follow either from his own hand or dummy, the lead is accepted. If the declarer before playing refuse to accept the lead, the leader may be penalized as provided in Law 76.

79. If a player called on to lead a suit have none of it, the penalty is paid.

### CARDS PLAYED IN ERROR

80. Should the fourth hand, not being dummy or declarer, play before the second, the latter may be required to play his highest or lowest card of the suit led, or to win or lose the trick. In such case, if the second hand be void of the suit led, the declarer in lieu of any other penalty may call upon the second hand to play the highest card of any designated suit. If he

---

\* The rule in Law 50c as to consultations governs the right of adversaries to consult as to whether such direction be given.



## 230 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

name a suit of which the second hand is void, the penalty is paid.\*

81. When any one, except dummy, omits playing to a trick, and such error is not corrected until he has played to the next, the declarer or either of his adversaries, as the case may be, may claim a new deal; should either decide that the deal stand, the surplus card (at the end of the hand) is considered played to the imperfect trick, but does not constitute a revoke therein.†

82. When any one, except dummy, plays two or more cards to the same trick and the mistake is not corrected, he is answerable for any consequent revokes he may make. When the error is detected during the play, the tricks may be counted face downward, to see if any contain more than four cards; should this be the case, the trick which contains a surplus card or cards may be

---

\* Should the declarer play third hand before the second hand, the fourth hand may without penalty play before his partner.

† As to the right of adversaries to consult, see Law 50c.

examined and such card or cards restored to the original holder.\*

## THE REVOKE †

83. A revoke occurs when a player, other than dummy, holding one or more cards of the suit led, plays a card of a different suit. It becomes an established revoke when the trick in which it occurs is turned and quitted by the rightful winners‡ (*i. e.*, the hand removed from the trick after it has been turned face downward on the table), or when either the revoking player or his partner, whether in turn or otherwise, leads or plays to the following trick.

84. The penalty for each established revoke is:

- (a) When the declarer revokes, he cannot score for tricks and his adversaries add 100 points to their score in the honor column for each

---

\* Either adversary may decide which card shall be considered played to the trick which contains more than four cards, but such decision shall not affect the winning or losing of the trick.

† See Law 75.

‡ Except as provided in Law 85.

## 232 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

revoke, in addition to any penalty to which they may be entitled for his failure to make good his declaration.

- (b) When either of the adversaries revokes, the declarer for the first revoke may either score 100 points in his honor column or take three tricks from his opponents and add them to his own.\* Such tricks may assist the declarer to make good his declaration,† but shall not entitle him to any further bonus in the honor column, by reason of the declaration having been doubled or redoubled, nor to a slam or little slam not otherwise obtained‡ (see Laws 7, 8 and 58). For each subsequent revoke he adds 100 points to his honor score.

---

\* The dummy may advise the declarer which penalty to exact.

† They may enable him to win a game and if that game conclude the rubber, give him the 250 points bonus.

‡ The value of the three tricks, doubled or redoubled, as the case may be, is counted in the trick score.

The value of their honors is the only score that can be made by a revoking side.

85. A player may ask his partner if he have a card of the suit which he has renounced; should the question be asked before the trick be turned and quitted, subsequent turning and quitting does not establish a revoke, and the error may be corrected unless the question be answered in the negative, or unless the revoking player or his partner have led or played to the following trick.

85a. Should the dummy leave the table during the play, he may ask his adversaries to protect him from revokes during his absence; such protection is generally called "the courtesies of the table" or "the courtesies due an absentee."

If he make such request the penalty for a revoke made by the declarer during the dummy's absence may not be enforced unless in due season an adversary have asked the declarer whether he have a card of the suit he has renounced.

86. If a player correct his mistake in

time to save a revoke, any player or players who have followed him may withdraw his or their cards and substitute others, and the cards so withdrawn are not exposed. If the player in fault be one of the declarer's adversaries, the card played in error is exposed, and the declarer may call it whenever he pleases, or he may require the offender to play his highest or lowest card of the suit to the trick.

86a. If the player in fault be the declarer, either adversary may require him to play the highest or lowest card of the suit in which he has renounced, provided both his adversaries have played to the current trick; but this penalty may not be exacted from the declarer when he is fourth in hand, nor can it be enforced at all from the dummy.

87. At the end of the play the claimants of a revoke may search all the tricks. If the cards have been mixed, the claim may be urged and proved if possible; but no proof is necessary and the claim is established if, after it is made, the accused

player or his partner mix the cards before they have been sufficiently examined by the adversaries.

88. A claim that a revoke has been made cannot be allowed after the cards have been cut for the following deal, or when the deal concludes the rubber, after the score has been made up and agreed upon, or after the cards have been cut for any purpose connected with the next rubber.

89. Should both sides revoke, the only score permitted is for honors. In such case, if one side revoke more than once, the penalty of 100 points for each extra revoke is scored by the other side.

### **GENERAL LAWS**

90. A trick turned and quitted may not be looked at (except under Law 82) until the end of the play. The penalty for the violation of this law is 25 points in the adverse honor score.

91. Any player during the play of a trick or after the four cards are played,

## 236 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

and before the trick is turned and quitted, may demand that the cards be placed before their respective players.

92. When an adversary of the declarer, before his partner plays, calls attention to the trick, either by saying it is his, or, without being requested to do so, by naming his card or drawing it toward him, the declarer may require such partner to play his highest or lowest card of the suit led, or to win or lose the trick.

93. An adversary of the declarer may call his partner's attention to the fact that he is about to play or lead out of turn; but if, during the play, he make any unauthorized reference to any incident of the play, the declarer may call a suit from the adversary whose next turn it is to lead. If the dummy similarly offend, either adversary may call a lead when it is the next turn of the declarer to lead from either hand.

94. In all cases where a penalty has been incurred, the offender is bound to

give reasonable time for the decision of his adversaries.

95. If the declarer concede one or more tricks and the concession be accepted, such trick or tricks belong to the adversaries even if it would have been impossible for the declarer to lose such trick or tricks had the hand been played out.\*

If an adversary of the declarer concede a trick or tricks, such concession is binding if agreed to at the time by the partner of the conceding player. Silence shall be regarded as consent.

### NEW CARDS

96. Unless a pack be imperfect, no player has the right to call for one new pack. When fresh cards are demanded, two packs must be furnished. When they are produced during a rubber, the adversaries of the player demanding them have the choice of the new cards. If it be the

---

\* Unless before the acceptance of the concession, the dummy, who has not looked at any cards in the hand of an adversary, demand that the deal be played out. (See Law 60*k*.)



## 238 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

beginning of a new rubber, the dealer, whether he or one of his adversaries call for the new cards, has the choice. New cards cannot be substituted after the pack has been cut for a new deal.

97. A card or cards torn or marked must be replaced by agreement or new cards furnished.

### BYSTANDERS

98. While a bystander, by agreement among the players, may decide any question, he should not say anything unless appealed to; and if he make any remark which calls attention to an oversight affecting the score, or to the exaction of a penalty, he is liable to be called upon by the players to pay the stakes (not extras) lost.

### ETIQUETTE OF AUCTION

In the game of Auction slight intimations convey much information. The laws fix penalties for an offense. To offend against etiquette is more serious

than to offend against a law; for in the latter case the offender is subject to the prescribed penalties; in the former his adversaries are without redress.

1. Declaration should be made in a simple manner, thus: "one heart," "one no trump," "pass," "double"; they should be made orally and not by gesture.

2. Aside from his legitimate declaration, a player should not indicate by word or gesture the nature of his hand, or his approval or disapproval of a play, bid, or double.

3. If a player demand that the cards be placed, he should do so for his own information and not to call his partner's attention to any card or play.

4. An opponent of the declarer should not lead until the preceding trick has been turned and quitted; nor, after having led a winning card, should he draw another from his hand before his partner has played to the current trick.

5. A card should not be played with such emphasis as to draw attention to it, nor

## 240 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

should a player detach one card from his hand and subsequently play another.

6. A player should not purposely incur a penalty because he is willing to pay it, nor should he make a second revoke to conceal a first.

7. Conversation during the play should be avoided, as it may annoy players at the table or at other tables in the room.

8. The dummy should not leave his seat to watch his partner play. He should not call attention to the score nor to any card or cards that he or the other players hold.

9. If a player say, "I have the rest," or any words indicating that the remaining tricks, or any number thereof, are his, and one or both of the other players expose his or their cards, or request him to play out the hand, he should not allow any information so obtained to influence his play.

10. A player having been cut out of one table should not seek admission in another unless willing to cut for the privilege of entry.

# **AUCTION DECLARATIONS 241**

## **SUMMARIZED PENALTIES**

For those who wish to quickly learn the penalty for an offense or to be referred to the law which applies to it, the penalties provided by the Code of 1917 have been summarized.

OFFENSE	PENALTY	LAW
<b>(BEFORE THE DEAL)</b>		
Cutting more than one card except as below	Must take highest	16
Cutting more than one card when cut- ting for partners		
	Must cut again	19
<b>(DURING THE DEAL)</b>		
Card exposed	Must deal again	37c
Misdeal	Must deal again	{ 36 37
Deal out of turn	New deal if discovered before end of deal, otherwise deal stands	{ 37f 38
Deal with wrong cards		
Omit to have pack cut		

## 242 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

OFFENSE (DURING THE DECLARATION)	PENALTY	LAW
Card exposed	{ Partner cannot bid or double and may be prohibited from opening that suit; card may also be called }	66
Bid out of turn	{ Opponents may accept or cancel such bid; in latter case, partner of offender is barred from bidding }	49
Pass out of turn	None	49b
Double out of turn Redouble out of turn	{ New deal or other privileges }	49a
Redoubling more than once	{ 100 points or new deal }	56
Doubling partner's declaration Redoubling partner's double	{ 50 points }	56
Insufficient bid	{ Made sufficient and partner debarred from bidding <i>pro tem.</i> }	50
Giving information concerning hand	{ Partner cannot bid }	52

# AUCTION DECLARATIONS 243

OFFENSE	PENALTY	LAW
Inadvertent bid	{ May be corrected before next player acts sub- ject to certain restric- tions.	{ 53
Bid when prohibited	{ May be set aside. No more bidding by player or partner	{ 50a

## (AFTER DECLARATION AND BEFORE PLAY)

Card exposed by Leader	{ May be called	67
Card exposed by Third Hand	{ It or lead may be called	67
Giving information about bidding	{ Lead may be called	51

## (DURING PLAY)

*If Declarer—*

Expose card	None	74
Lead out of turn	{ None, but he may not rectify error unless directed to do so	{ 77
Name or touch card of Dummy	{ May be called upon to play it	{ 64
Claim tricks	{ May be called upon to show hand	{ 74

## 244 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

OFFENSE	PENALTY	LAW
First revoke	100 points	84a
Subsequent revokes	100 points each	84a

### *If Dummy—*

Revoke	None	63
Suggest a play	{ It may be required or prohibited }	62
After looking at card in hand of a player, call attention to a revoke, exposed card, or lead out of turn	{ No penalty may be exacted for the offense }	60 61
Give information about bidding	{ Lead may be called }	51
Call to attention of Declarer that he is about to lead from wrong hand	{ Declarer may be called upon to lead from that hand }	62a

### *If an Adversary of Declarer—*

Expose card	It may be called	68
Play 2 or more cards at once	{ All may be called }	71
Lead out of turn	{ Exposed card or called lead }	76 78

# AUCTION DECLARATIONS      245

OFFENSE	PENALTY.	LAW
Lead before partner plays to previous trick	{ Partner may be made to win trick if he can }	73
Give information about bidding		
	Lead may be called	51
Fourth Hand play before Second	{ Second Hand may be called upon to play highest or lowest, to win or lose trick, or if he be void of suit led to play highest card of any suit named }	80
Call attention to trick	{ Partner may have to play highest or lowest, or win or lose trick }	92
First revoke	100 points, or 3 tricks	84 <i>b</i>
Subsequently revoke	100 points for each	84 <i>b</i>

## GENERAL LAWS—

Not playing to trick	New deal	81
Playing 2 cards to trick	{ Liable for revoke }	{ 82 40 }
Playing with less than proper number of cards		
Playing with more than 13 cards	New deal	37 <i>d</i>
Looking at quitted trick	25 points	90
Concede trick	Concession stands	95



## XII

### DECISIONS

The following decisions interpreting the Laws have been rendered by the Card Committee of the Whist Club of New York. The privilege of publishing them here is appreciatively acknowledged.

#### FORMING TABLES

*Question.*—Three players are in the room when three more enter. Do the first three cut with the newcomers, or have they the right to play in the first rubber?

*Decision.*—Law 17 expressly provides that those first in the room have the prior right; it accurately covers this case.

---

*Question.*—A player who has cut out of one table obtains admission into another by cutting for the privilege. At the end of the first rubber what is his status?

*Decision.*—He must cut again for the privilege of staying in.

*Question.*—A player who has cut out of one table attempts to enter another by cutting for the privilege. He cuts the highest card. At the end of the rubber, must he cut again for the privilege of entry?

*Decision.*—No; he is in by right.

---

*Question.*—Five players at one table. A (sixth) player cuts out from another table and declares his intention of entering. At the conclusion of the rubber a newcomer enters the room and claims the right of entry. Has the newcomer a prior right to the player who has declared his intention of cutting for the privilege of entry?

*Decision.*—No; the table is complete (Law 18).

## CHANGING SEATS

*Question.*—After the cards have been cut by the proper player, and after the deal has commenced, can either adversary of the Dealer change his seat without the consent of his partner? If so, can he

## 248 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

make such change without the consent of either or both adversaries?

*Decision.*—Law 19 provides that the Dealer who has choice of cards and seats, having once made his selection, must abide by it. The same rule should apply to the other players. A player having once selected a seat cannot change it unless he obtain unanimous consent.

### INSUFFICIENT BID

*Question.*—The Dealer bids two Spades, Second Hand three Clubs, Third Hand passes, Fourth Hand two No Trumps. The Dealer then repeats his bid of two Spades, instead of requiring the Fourth Hand to increase his bid to three No Trumps. The Second Hand demands that the bid be made three Spades, which he doubles and sets the contract for 300. Has he the right to do this?

*Decision.*—The declaration of two No Trump over three Clubs was an insufficient bid and the adversary on the left then had the right, set forth in Law 50, to

demand either that the bid be made sufficient, or to overcall. Instead of doing this he himself made an insufficient bid and thereby became liable for the penalty for such action.

---

*Question.*—The Dealer starts with two Diamonds. Not noticing the “two,” the Second Hand bids two Clubs. The Dealer’s partner says: “Not enough; but I do not want to make it three. I bid two Hearts.” The opponents insist that as the Third Hand has called attention to the insufficient bid, it must first be made sufficient, and that it takes three Hearts to overcall it. Are they right?

*Decision.*—“Not enough” simply calls attention to the fact that the irregularity has been noticed but is not a demand that it be corrected. A player is not bound to exact the penalty, as the laws give him the right to accept the bid as regular and either pass or overcall it. The bid of two Hearts is perfectly correct.

## 250 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

*Question.*—The Dealer bids two Diamonds and the Second Hand overcalls him with two Clubs. The Fourth Hand says: "Three Clubs are necessary." The Third Hand says, "I refuse to exact the penalty, and bid two Hearts." Two questions are involved: Does the bid of two Hearts stand, and is there any penalty chargeable against a player who calls attention to an error made by his own side?

*Decision.*—The remark made by the Fourth Hand does not subject him to any penalty. If the Second Hand did not take his partner's hint and increase the Club declaration before the bid of two Hearts, the latter bid must stand.

### DOUBLING

*Question.*—The Dealer bids No Trump. Second Hand passes and Third Hand declares four Diamonds. After the Fourth Hand passes, the Dealer goes back to No Trumps, bidding four. Second and Third Hand both pass, but the Fourth Hand studies his cards for some time without

saying anything. Thinking he has passed, his partner leads a card and the hand of the Dummy is placed on the table showing eight Diamonds to the King Queen Knave.

The Fourth Hand, not having noticed the lead, doubles, and the Dealer immediately redoubles.

Does either the double or the redouble stand, and as the Dealer redoubled after seeing his partner's hand, does this give the adversaries the right to demand a new deal?

*Decision.*—Regardless of whether the Fourth Hand had the right to double after his partner's lead, the redouble accepts the action and waives any penalty therefor. Under the conditions the laws do not provide, nor is it apparent that they should provide, any penalty for the Dealer's redouble, and the hand must therefore be played with the declaration four No Trumps redoubled.

## 252 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

### DOUBLING PARTNER'S DECLARATION

*Question.*—A player doubles his partner's declaration. An opponent demands the penalty of 50 points allowed under Law 56, and the player who has made the double prohibited by law then demands the right to make another declaration. Has he such right?

*Decision.*—A double is a declaration, and although Law 56 prohibits the double of a partner's declaration and provides a penalty for such act, a player who is guilty of such a double is in the position of having made a declaration which the laws do not allow to stand. It is, however, nevertheless a declaration, and he cannot again declare, regardless of whether or not the penalty be enforced, until his next turn.

### FINAL BID

*Question.*—The Dealer bids one Spade. The other players all pass. Under the impression that an adversary has bid Hearts the Dealer bids two Spades. When

his attention is called to the fact that no one has overcalled his first bid, the Dealer claims that it stands; his opponents insist that the declaration is two Spades, which they are at liberty to double or overcall, as it reopens the bidding. Who is right?

*Decision.*—The laws provide that a declaration becomes final when it is passed by three players in succession. In the case cited this happened. After one Spade became the final declaration it was not in the power of the original Declarer to alter it. (See note to Law 47.)

### LEADS OUT OF TURN

*Question.*—An adversary of the Declarer leads and each player follows suit, the trick being won by the leader. Before the cards are touched he plays another card from his own hand to the four already on the table and proceeds to gather the five cards. The Declarer claims that the adversary has led out of turn. The adversary states that he believed he had not played to the trick from his own hand and



## 254 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

therefore played the card. Is it a lead out of turn?

*Decision.*—The adversary has not led out of turn. His word must be taken as correctly representing the fact that he played a second time to one trick.

Compare Drayton whist decisions, Case 26.

Cavendish, Case 11.

### CALLING HIGHEST CARD

*Question.*—The Declarer leads a Heart from Dummy. Second Hand plays the Nine of Spades, and his partner asks him, “No Hearts, partner?” to which he answers, “Yes, I have.” The Declarer at once says, “Leave the Nine,” but adds, “Play your highest Heart.” The adversaries object, on the ground that the Declarer has selected his penalty and cannot change it. Are they right?

*Decision.*—The entire question hinges upon whether the player fully made his election. Had he completed his decision in such words, as, for example, “Leave the

Nine of Spades upon the table," that would have been a determination that he elected to call that card, and he could not thereafter have demanded the playing of the highest Heart.

In this case, however, the Declarer did not apparently reach a final determination. "Leave the Nine" does not mean much more than the mere word "leave," which could not be construed as a decision. It might be that the intent was to finish the sentence, "Leave the Nine on the table or not, as you choose, but play your highest Heart." It would, therefore, seem that the Declarer was within his rights in demanding the playing of the highest Heart.

#### REVOKE

*Question.*—Diamonds are trumps. The player on the Declarer's right leads a Club. The Declarer has a small Club and a Diamond and, carelessly, while talking, plays the Diamond, thinking he is playing his Club. His left-hand adversary

## 256 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

plays the winning Club and also does not see the Diamond which has fallen under the trick; Dummy's card is played and the left-hand adversary turns the trick and leads to the next one, a Diamond. The Declarer then looks for his Diamond and, missing it, says he played it in the previous trick, which is searched and the Diamond discovered. Has the Declarer revoked?

*Decision.*—The Declarer has not revoked. A player by turning and quitting a trick not his own cannot thereby establish a revoke against an adversary, nor does his lead either in his own right turn or otherwise establish it.

---

*Question.*—The declaration is No Trump and the opening lead a Spade; all follow suit. The Declarer renounces on the second trick (also a Spade) and it is turned and quitted. The same thing happens to the third trick. The fourth trick is won by the Dummy with the Queen of Spades; the Declarer for the third time does not

follow suit. Before the fourth trick is turned the Declarer places his hand, which contains a small Spade, on the table and claims the balance of the tricks. The adversaries state that they concede the nine remaining tricks, but claim three revokes. The Declarer admits two revokes, and the question is whether a third revoke, under these circumstances, is established.

*Decision.*—The laws must be strictly construed. They expressly provide that a revoke may be corrected at any time until the trick be turned and quitted or the revoking player or his partner, whether in turn or otherwise, lead or play to the following trick. The placing of a player's entire hand upon the table is neither leading nor playing to a trick.

---

*Question.*—A suit of which a player has but one card is led twice. He renounces both times. Is he penalized once or twice? The claim is, having but *one* card he could have followed only once and,

## 258 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

therefore, should be held for only one offence.

*Decision.*—Law 83 provides: “A revoke occurs when a player other than Dummy, holding one or more cards of the suit led, plays a card of a different suit.” Whether the player hold one or more cards of the suit on which he renounces does not affect the situation. Every time the suit is led and he, holding a card of it, fails to follow, he is chargeable with a revoke.

---

*Question.*—The Declarer makes a grand slam, and during the play of the deal one of his adversaries revokes. Is the Declarer entitled to 100 points for such revoke?

*Decision.*—The Declarer is entitled to 100 points penalty plus the grand slam.

---

*Question.*—The bid is five Hearts. The Declarer makes a small slam, but revokes. He insists that he can score all he has made in the honor column, although nothing toward game. This he puts down as four honors in one hand, 64, and

little slam, 50. The adversaries dispute the slam score.

*Decision.*—Little slam cannot be counted. Law 84 so provides. See also footnote to Law 8.

---

*Question.*—The declaration is four Clubs. To go game the Declarer must use one of Dummy's trumps on a Spade.

Declarer leads a Spade, Dummy trumps, the Fourth Hand overtrumps and leads a Diamond. Declarer plays to the lead, when the leader exclaims, "What did I play to that last trick?" Dummy, who has been looking at his opponent's hand, says, "Why, you revoked, of course."

The question is: Did Dummy call attention to the revoke or did the revoking player do so by his exclamation? Further, can the Declarer insist on the correction of the revoke after he has played to the next trick?

*Decision.*—This case comes within the strict ruling of the law which provides that when a Dummy has looked at the

## 260 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

cards of an adversary and calls attention to a revoke the penalty cannot be enforced. It is true that the case is made unusually close by the fact that the offending player himself raised the question, but all that he said was, "What did I play to that last trick?"

It is possible, although not probable, that the Declarer, even after this remark, would not notice the revoke, but be that as it may, the Dummy's act, under the laws, precludes a penalty being allowed for it. It is quite clear that the Declarer cannot insist upon the correction of the revoke.

### EXPOSED CARD

*Question.*—During the deal one of the adversaries of the Dealer sees the bottom card and demands a new deal. Is this within his rights?

*Decision.*—Law 65 expressly defines an exposed card. The case above cited does not come within the definition and, there-

fore, the adversary has not the right to demand a new deal.

It would be obviously improper to allow a new deal in such case, as no damage has been suffered. As a matter of fact, the subject of the claimant's complaint may be, to a certain extent, his own fault.

The English law was changed because it was found that unscrupulous players frequently took pains to see a card during the deal just for the purpose of exacting the penalty.

It is clear that unless the Dealer's partner see the card no damage can be done to the adversary.

## SURPLUS CARD

*Question.*—The fall of the cards indicates that the Declarer will make a small slam when with three tricks left to play one of the adversaries claims that it is a misdeal and shows four cards, two of which are duplicates (the Four of Clubs). One of these belongs to the other pack. The three other players have the correct



## 262 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

number of cards. The footnote to Law 40 provides that when a deal is concluded without any claim of irregularity that fact shall be deemed as conclusive that a missing card was part of the pack during the deal. Does that law apply in this case?

*Decision.*—When three players have the correct number of cards and the fourth one extra card, which upon examination proves to belong to the other pack, the footnote to Law 40 does not apply. That note provides that it is presumed, when a deal is completed without any claim of irregularity, that the fifty-two cards have been dealt and that the mislaying of any card has been due to the fault of the player who properly received it.

In this case the presumption would be that the cards had been properly dealt and that the acquisition of the extra card was due to the error of the player who held it. Even had the extra card been

dealt to the player he could have protected himself by counting his cards, and it is not apparent that he has suffered any injury. He is not entitled to a new deal.

### XIII

## DUPLICATE AUCTION

During the past few years Duplicate Auction has slowly, but surely, increased in popularity. A number of clubs have taken it up and have found that Progressive Duplicate possesses much of the charm of Progressive Whist with larger gains and losses, and consequently more thrills. In social circles where Auction is not played for a stake, the duplicate feature materially increases the interest, and, were it a practical game for four people, it would doubtless be the prevailing fad. Mnemonic Duplicate Auction, however, is quite out of the question. Even in Whist, the Mnemonic feature proved to be objectionable, as the poorest players were sure to recall some peculiarity of a hand and utilize their memory on the over-play, while many experts were able to place every important card. The game therefore became merely a mental experi-

ment, not a test of Whist skill. In Auction it is obviously much more unwise to permit the same pair to play the same hand a second time, as the bidding is so easily remembered that the over-play is little more than a joke.

The two practical methods for Duplicate Auction are contests between two teams, each one containing four or more players, and progressive games, which can be managed with any number of tables from three up. The latter plan has been given a much more thorough test. As yet it cannot be said to have generally established itself as a popular pastime, but many with conservative judgment believe that it is destined to be the Auction of the future.

The one place in which Progressive Duplicate has been developed more carefully, studied more thoroughly and played more skilfully than elsewhere in the East is the Knickerbocker Whist Club in New York. The Thursday evening games at that club have been largely attended and

## 266 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

a high standard of play has been attained. After experimenting with various laws the Card Committee of the Knickerbocker, late in 1916, adopted a code which has worked very satisfactorily in its Progressive Duplicate contests. The club management has most courteously permitted the publication here of these laws, as they must be of interest to all who play or who contemplate playing the duplicate game. Even those who have not taken it up will wish to know how the contests with many tables in play are managed at the club which is generally known as "The Home of Duplicate Auction." A verbatim copy of the Knickerbocker code follows:

### LAWS OF AUCTION IN DUPLICATE OF KNICKERBOCKER WHIST CLUB

The Laws of Auction govern the play except as modified by the following special laws:

1. The arrow on the board in play must

point north before a card is removed therefrom. The boards must be played in regular order at each table beginning with the lowest number.

2. Count the cards in each hand, both before and after playing each board. If, at any time, any hand contains more or less than thirteen cards, the course to be pursued is as follows:

(a) When the irregularity is discovered during the original deal, the hand must be redealt.

(b) When the irregularity is discovered subsequent to the first round and before the dummy hand is laid on the table, the hand must be sent back to the preceding table and there rectified under the direction of the card committee. Each pair at the preceding table whose hands contain an incorrect number of cards shall be penalized fifty (50) points.

(c) When the irregularity is discovered subsequent to the first round

and after or during the play of the hand, the hand must be rectified as provided above and passed to the next table without further play at the table where the error was discovered. In such case, if both pairs held hands that contained an incorrect number of cards, they shall take average score for that hand; if, however, the incorrect hands were held by one pair only, that pair shall take the lowest score and their opponents the highest score for that hand.

3. Each player, when it is his turn to play, must place his card face upward on the table before him. The cards must be allowed to remain face upward on the table until all have played to the trick; if he or his partner win the trick, the cards should be turned over and point to his partner; otherwise they should point toward the adversaries.

4. A trick is turned and quitted when all four players have turned and quitted their respective cards.

5. The cards must be left in the order in which they are played until the score of the particular deal has been recorded.

6. Check each score with your opponents at the completion of each round and if correct, initial same. Scores so initialed as correct cannot be changed thereafter except with the consent of both pairs. In case an incorrect score of any round is recorded and initialed both pairs shall be penalized one hundred (100) points.

7. A penalty for a bid out of turn, other than passing, shall be fifty (50) points in the adverse honor score. This includes a double or redouble out of turn. A bid out of turn, however, is void and does not affect the correct order of bidding.

8. A revoke may be claimed at any time before the first bid of the following board is made, or if there is no other board, before the score of the deal in which the revoke occurred has been made up and agreed upon. Only one revoke may be claimed in any one hand.



## 270 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

Each hand shall be complete in itself and the points scored as in Auction.

9. No rubbers shall be played. The winners of each game without the aid of a previous score, shall add one hundred (100) points to their honor score.

10. No pair shall score over three hundred (300) points penalty on any one board. Any excess over three hundred (300) points shall be placed by the winning pair in their excess column. The losing pair, however, must bear their total loss. This limitation does not include the penalty for a revoke.

11. At the completion of each round, the scores of each pair shall be added and the difference between them obtained. The pair having the higher score shall take "plus" the difference so obtained, and the other pair "minus" that amount. At the end of the game, each pair shall add up their scores of each round, and record the net total. A mistake of addition or subtraction in recording the net total shall be penalized fifty (50) points.

12. The score of any pair is compared only with that of the other pairs who have played the same hands. A pair obtains a "plus" score for the contest when their net total is more than the average; a "minus" score for the contest when their net total is less than the average. The pairs having the largest net "plus" win the contest each way of the table.

13. Any dispute arising as to the interpretation of these rules shall be referred to the card committee and their decision shall be final.

## XIV

# GLOSSARY OF AUCTION TERMS

*Advance.*

To increase, in the declaration named, the number of tricks bid by the partner. This term is used more frequently when the increase is made without an intervening bid, but it is also applied to a raise after a bid by an opponent. (See *Raise*, *v.*)

*Above the line.* }  
*Below the line.* }

Points in the honor score are spoken of as a score above the line; points in the trick score, as a score below the line. These terms are derived from the form of score-sheet in which each partnership has only one column.

*Best.*

Same as Master card.

*Bid (n.).*

When a player makes a bid he names a suit or No Trump and thereby contracts that, unless overbid, he will with such suit the trump or without a trump (as the case may be) with his own hand together with his partner's win at least the number of odd tricks he specifies.

(*v.*).

To make a bid.

## AUCTION DECLARATIONS 273

- Blocking.* Obstructing a suit by holding up a winning card of it.
- Bonus.* (1) The 250 points added to the score of the winner of a rubber.  
(2) A score in the honor column given to the Declarer who has been doubled and makes his contract.
- Book.* (1) For the Declarer's opponents; the number of tricks which if taken by them will permit the Declarer to exactly make his contract.  
(2) For the Declarer; the number of tricks he must take to make his contract.
- Bring in.* To make all the remaining cards of a suit.
- Bust.* A hand which cannot take a trick, if the declaration be No Trump.
- Call (n.).* A bid.  
(v.). To make a call.
- Card of Reentry.* See *Reentry*.
- Chicane.* One hand void of trumps. Prior to the adoption of the Laws of November, 1913, the value of simple honors was allowed for holding chicane, since then any allowance for it has been eliminated.

---

\* In Whist and Bridge, a Book means six tricks; but in Auction the term is rarely used with that meaning.

## 274 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

- Command.* The holding of the best unplayed card of a suit.
- Contract.* The number of tricks called for by the final declaration.
- Conventional.* A term applied to declarations and plays generally approved and adopted.
- Correct Pack.* A pack of fifty-two cards, divided into four suits of thirteen cards each, each suit containing one card of each denomination.
- Coup.* A strategic stroke; a brilliant play.
- Cover.* To play higher than any card previously played to the trick.
- Cross-Ruff.* A double ruff. It occurs when each partner trumps a suit, *e.g.*, when "North" trumps a suit led by "South," who in turn trumps a suit by "North."
- Cutting.* The act of separating the pack and putting the lower portion on top just prior to the deal.  
Drawing cards to determine partners, etc.
- Deal (n.).* The fifty-two cards as dealt or the four hands combined.
- (v.).* To distribute the cards into four equal packets.
- Dealer.* The player who distributes the cards.
- Declaration.* A bid, a pass, a double or a redouble.

## AUCTION DECLARATIONS 275

*Declare.*

To make a declaration.

*Declarer.*

A term rather loosely used to mean:

(1) A player who makes a declaration.

(2) The player who makes the final bid.

(3) Such player's partner, if the latter have mentioned the suit or No Trump finally declared before the final bidder.

(4) The player who plays the two hands.

In this glossary it is given meaning (4).

*Defeat the Contract.*

To keep the Declarer from taking the number of tricks named in his bid.

*Discard (n.).*

A card (not a trump) played to the lead of another suit.

(v.).

To play a discard.

*Double (n.).*

A declaration made over an opponent's bid, the effect of which is to double the penalty value of each undertrick, if the opponent's contract be defeated. If the opponent's contract be made after being doubled, the scoring value of each odd trick is doubled, and the Declarer receives a bonus, in his honor score, of 50 points, if he make his contract

## 276 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

- (v.).                      exactly, and 50 additional points for each trick over his contract.
- Double Chicane.*              To make a double.
- The hands of both partners void of trumps. (See *Chicane*.)
- Ducking.*                      Refusing to win a trick when able to do so.
- Dummy.*                      (1) The partner of the Declarer, after he has spread his hand up on the table.
- (2) The hand laid upon the table by the Declarer's partner.
- Duplicate Auction.*              A modification of Auction in which each hand is played more than once.
- Duplicate Play.*              See *Overplay*.
- Eldest Hand.*                      The player on the Declarer's left.
- Established Suit.*              A suit in such condition that the holder is sure to take every remaining trick in it if it be led.
- Exit Card.*                      A term used when Nullos were played to designate a card with which a player could get the lead out of his own hand.
- Exposed Card.*                      Every card belonging to an adversary of the Declarer which is faced upon the table otherwise than in the regular course of the play, or shown in any manner to the partner of the holder.
- Face Cards.*                      King, Queen, and Knave.

## AUCTION DECLARATIONS 277

- Fall.* The order in which cards are played to a trick.
- False Card.* A card which is not the conventional play under the circumstances.
- Final Declaration.* A bid which is not overcalled.
- Finesse.* The play of the lower card of a tenace.
- First Hand.* The leader to each trick.
- Flag-Flying.* Making a bid which the bidder expects will be defeated; the object being to prevent an adverse game.
- Follow Suit.* To play the same suit as the card led.
- Force.* To lead a card that another player must trump to win.
- Forced Bid.* Any bid except a free bid. (See *Free Bid.*)
- Forced Lead.* A lead which a player is compelled to make, not because he desires to lead that suit, but because to lead any other would be more damaging.
- Fourchette.* The cards next higher and next lower than one led or played by the right-hand opponent.
- Fourth Best.* A card of any suit in which the holder received from the Dealer exactly three higher.
- Fourth Hand.* (1) In the bidding: the player on the right of the Dealer.



## 278 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

- (2) In the play: the player on the right of the leader.
- Freak Hands.* Hands in which unusual or highly remarkable combinations of cards occur.
- Free Bid.* The Dealer's first declaration, or the bid of Second Hand over the Dealer's pass.
- Free Double.* The double of a declaration which, if successful undoubled, would score game.
- Game.* A score of 30 points or more in the trick score, made in one or more deals.
- Game All.* When each pair have won one game. (See *Rubber Game*.)
- Game In.* The position of a pair who have won the first game.
- Game Out.* The position of a pair who have lost the first game.
- Get In.* To obtain the lead.
- Grand Coup.* Throwing away a superfluous trump.
- Grand Slam.* Same as *Slam*.
- Guarded.* A card so protected by smaller cards of the same suit that it cannot be won by the adversaries should they lead higher cards.
- Hand.* The thirteen cards dealt to any player. The four hands are often somewhat incorrectly referred to as "the hand." The

"deal" is the proper and less confusing term.

*Holding Up.*

Refusing to take a trick so as to save a winning card for a later trick.

*Honor Column.*

The place on a score-sheet where all points, except those made by winning tricks, are entered.

*Honors.*

(1) In a trump declaration, the Ace, King, Queen, Knave, and Ten of trumps.

(2) In a No Trump declaration, the Aces.

(3) The term is also used in describing the Ace, King, Queen, Knave, and Ten of any suit, whether or not it be the trump.

*Imperfect Pack.*

A pack which is not correct. (See *Correct Pack*.)

*Incorrect Pack.*

A pack which is not correct. (See *Correct Pack*.)

*Informatory Game.*

The style of declaration and play that gives information.

*Initial Bid.*

The first bid by the Dealer or (the Dealer having passed) the first bid by the Second Hand.

*Insufficient Declaration.*

A declaration which is lower in value than its predecessor.

*Lead (n.).*

The first card played to any trick.

(v.).

To play the first card to any trick.

## 280 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

<i>Leader.</i>	The first player to any trick.
<i>Lead Through.</i>	( <i>n.</i> ) A lead from an opponent on the right. ( <i>v.</i> ) To make a lead through.
<i>Lead Toward.</i>	( <i>n.</i> ) A lead from the partner. ( <i>v.</i> ) To make a lead toward.
<i>Lead Up To.</i>	( <i>n.</i> ) A lead from an opponent on the left. ( <i>v.</i> ) To make a lead up to.
<i>Little Slam.</i>	Twelve tricks taken by one side.
<i>Long.</i>	Holding more than three cards of a suit.
<i>Long Cards.</i>	The cards remaining in a hand after all the others of the same suit have been played.
<i>Long Suit.</i>	A suit which originally contained more than three cards.
<i>Long Trumps.</i>	See <i>Long Cards</i> .
<i>Losing Card.</i>	One which cannot win a trick.
<i>Love.</i>	No trick score on the current game.
<i>Love All.</i>	The state of the score before either side has made a point for tricks on the current game.
<i>Make a Card.</i>	To take a trick with it.
<i>Make a Contract.</i>	To win at least the number of tricks named by the bidder.
<i>Make Up.</i>	To shuffle a pack so that it is ready for the next Dealer.
<i>Mask a Signal.</i>	To start a signal and not complete it on the next trick of the suit.

## AUCTION DECLARATIONS 281

- Master Card.* The highest unplayed card of a suit.
- Memory Duplicate.* See *Mnemonic Duplicate*.
- Mnemonic Duplicate.* A system of Duplicate Auction in which a player participates in both the original and the duplicate play of a deal.
- Noninformatory Game.* A style of game that gives little or no information.
- No Trump.* A declaration in which the deal is played without a trump, all the suits having equal value.
- Null.* A declaration not incorporated in the laws, by which the bidder contracts to force his opponents to take tricks.
- Odd Tricks.* Tricks in excess of six taken by one side.
- Opening.* The first lead of a suit, or deal, as the case may be.
- Original Lead.* The first lead of a deal.
- Original Play.* The first play of a deal in a duplicate match.
- Overbid.* To make a declaration higher than its predecessor.
- Overcall.* Same as *Overbid*.
- Overplay.* The second or any subsequent play of a deal in a duplicate game.
- Pass.* To refuse the opportunity to bid, double or redouble.
- Pianola Hand.* One which plays itself. A hand in which there is no oppor-

## 282 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

tunity to gain tricks by good play.

*Plain Suit.*

A suit not trump. The term is used only when there is a declared trump.

*Play (n.).*

That part of the deal, after the final declaration, during which the cards are played.

*(v.).*

To take a card from the hand and place it on the table; also, if Declarer, to touch a card in the Dummy, except when arranging the hand.

*Play the Hand.*

To play the Declarer's hand and Dummy's.

*Play to the Score.*

To vary the usual play so as to insure the number of tricks necessary either to win or to save the game, or to make or defeat the declaration.

*Points.*

All scores of any character.

*Pone.*

The player on the right of the Declarer.

*Post-Mortem.*

A talk over, or criticism of, a deal that has been played.

*Preemptive Bid.*

An original bid of more than two (original bids of two are more informatory than preemptive) or a declaration higher than is necessary to overcall the preceding bid, made for the purpose of preventing the opponents from bidding.

- Private Convention.* A system of play or declaration understood only by the partners who use it.
- Progressive Auction.* A method of play, in which certain players, generally the East and West, move from table to table.
- Protected Suit.* A suit containing one or more cards so guarded as to be practically certain to take at least one trick if led by the opponents.
- Quick Trick.* A trick which can be made, on the first or second round of a suit.
- Quitted.* The condition of a trick after the winner, or his partner, has turned it face down and removed his hand from it.
- Raise (n.).* A bid increasing the number of tricks in the partner's declaration whether he has been overbid or not.
- (v.). To increase the number of tricks in the partner's declaration, whether he has been overbid or not. (See *Advance.*)
- Raiser.* A card which helps to justify a raise.
- Redouble (n.).* A declaration made after an opponent's double, the effect of which is to make the trick, penalty, and bonus values twice

## 284 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

- the size they have been made by the double. (See *Double*.)
- (v.). To make a redouble.
- Reentry.* Regaining the lead. A card of reentry is one which is sure to win and therefore insures the obtaining of the lead.
- Renounce.* Not to follow suit.
- Rescue (n.).* The taking of the partner out of a declaration that seems likely to prove disastrous.
- (v.). To take the partner out of a declaration that seems likely to prove disastrous
- Revoke.* To renounce when holding a card of the suit led.
- Round.* (1) In the bidding, one declaration or pass by each player.  
(2) In the play, a trick.
- Rubber.* Two out of three games. When one side wins the first two, the third is not played.
- Rubber Game.* The third game of a rubber.
- Ruff (n.).* The playing of a trump upon the lead of a plain suit.
- (v.). To trump.
- Score.* The record of a match, game, or deal.
- Secondary Bid.* A declaration made by a player after he has previously passed.
- Second Hand.* (1) In the bidding, the player to the left of the Dealer.

(2) In the play, the player to the left of the leader.

*See-Saw.*

Same as *Cross-Ruff*.

*Sequence.*

Two or more cards in consecutive order.

*Set.*

To keep the Declarer from winning the number of tricks he has named as his contract.

*Shift (n.).*

When a player holds a solid suit against his right-hand opponent's No Trump declaration and bids another weaker suit hoping to force up the No Trump bid and double it, the play is called "The Shift," because the player making it plans, if doubled, to shift to his solid suit.

(v.).

(1) To open a suit after the partner has opened another.

(2) To bid a suit or No Trump after the partner has made another declaration.

*Short Suit.*

A suit which originally contained less than four cards.

*Shuffle.*

To make up the pack.

*Shut-out Bid.*

See *Preemptive Bid*.

*Side Suit.*

Same as *Plain Suit*.

*Side Trick.*

When a trump is declared, a trick in any other suit is called a side trick.



## 286 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

- Signal.* To play an unnecessarily high card followed by a smaller of the same suit.
- Single-Table Duplicate.* Same as *Mnemonic Duplicate*.
- Singleton.* The only card of a suit dealt to a hand.
- Slam.* Thirteen tricks taken by one partnership.
- Solid Suit.* A suit containing the Ace and other cards in sequence and of such length that the holder will take every trick in the suit unless there is a very unusual distribution of the adverse holding.
- Stopped Suit.* Same as *Protected Suit*.
- Strengthening Card.* A medium or high card of a suit, led with the expectation of aiding the partner.
- Strong Suit.* One in which a player has both high cards and numerical strength.
- Suit.* One of the four main divisions of the pack.
- Supporting Bid.* A bid increasing the number of tricks in the partner's declaration after the partner has been overbid.
- Take-out (n.).* A change to a declaration different from that made by the partner, when there has been no intervening bid or when the partner has been doubled.
- (v.). To make a take-out bid.

- Tenace.* The best and third best or the second and fourth best of a suit. The former is called a Major Tenace, the latter a Minor Tenace. The first, third, and fifth best constitute a Double Tenace. The best and fourth best are often called the Imperfect Tenace.
- Third Hand.* (1) In the bidding, the partner of the Dealer.  
(2) In the play, the partner of the leader.
- Thirteener* The unplayed card of any suit after just twelve cards of it have been played.
- Throwing the Lead.* Playing a card that forces another player to take the trick.
- Trick.* The four cards played on one round.
- Trick Column.* The part of the score-sheet where points made by winning tricks are entered.
- Trump (n.).* A card of the trump suit.  
*(v.).* To play a trump on the lead of another suit.
- Trump Suit.* The suit finally declared.
- Unblocking.* Getting rid of high cards of a partner's suit.
- Underbid.* To make a bid insufficient to overbid its predecessor.
- Underplay.* The lead or play of a losing card when holding a winning one of the suit.

## 288 AUCTION DECLARATIONS

*Undertrick.*

Any trick lost by the Declarer in excess of the number he can lose and still fulfil his contract.

*Weak Suit.*

One which contains few, if any, high cards.

*Winning Cards.*

Cards that are the highest unplayed of their suit.

*Yarborough.*

A hand which contains no card higher than a Nine.





